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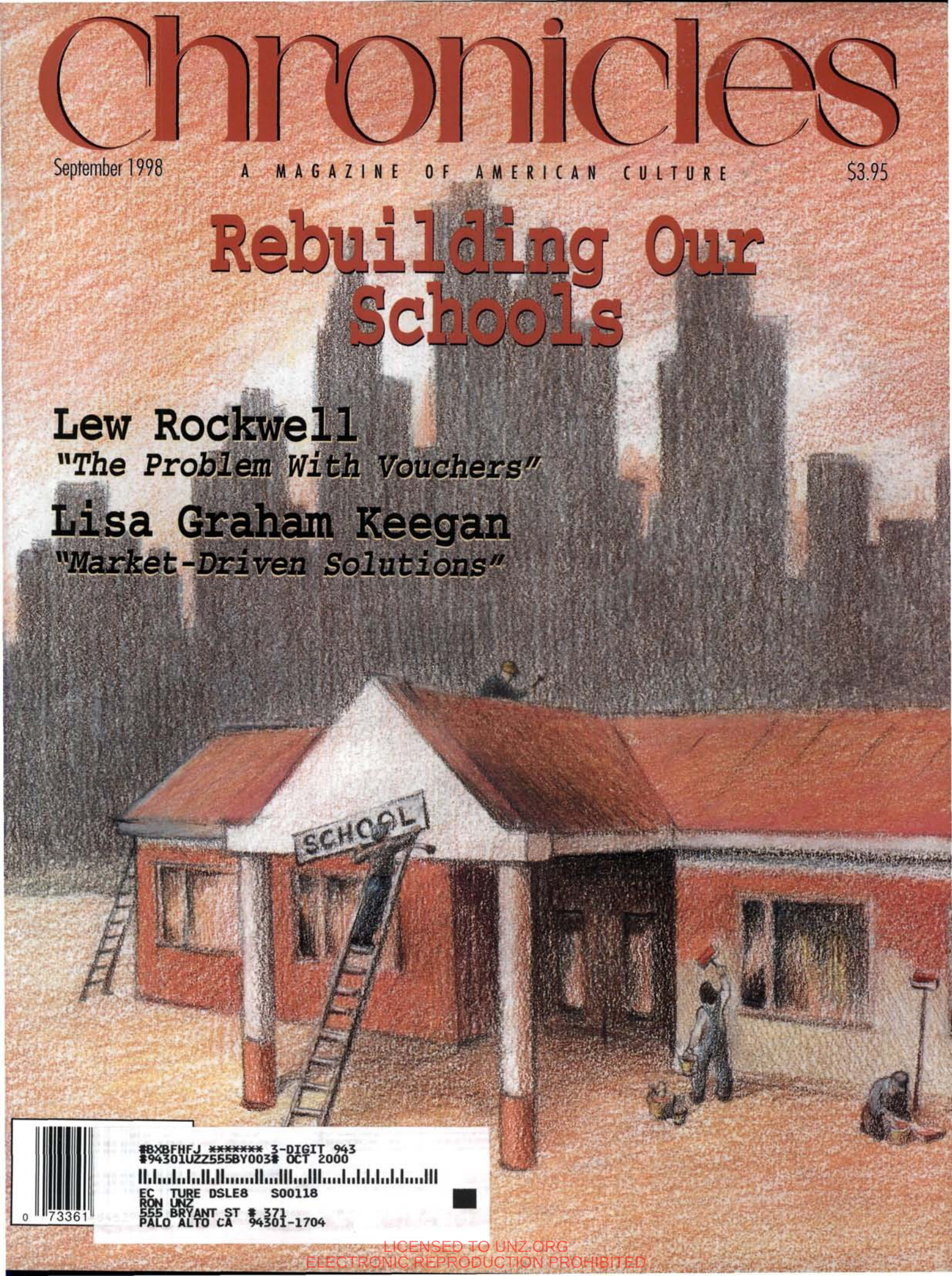


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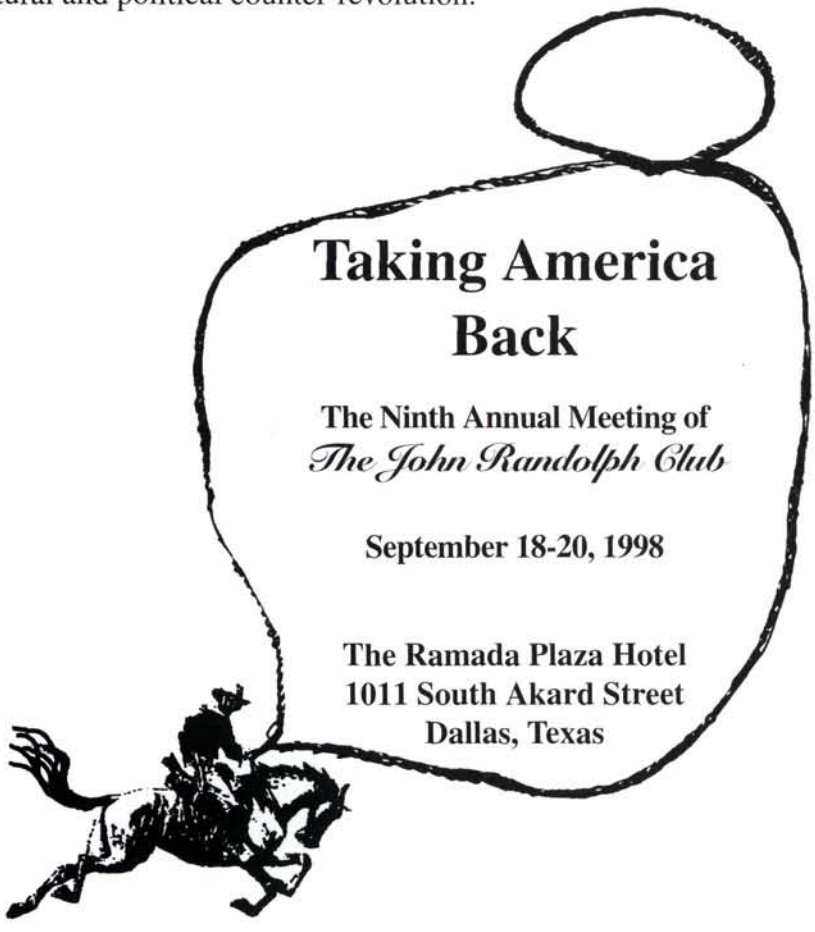


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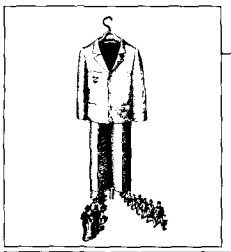

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## On Rich and Poor

There must be some mistake. After finishing Bob Djurdjevic's "Wiping Out the Middle Class" (May), I suspect someone has sneaked the latest issue of *Mother Jones* inside a *Chronicles* cover. Such hand-wringing over an alarmist report on "income inequality" released by a liberal Washington think tank whose mission is to lobby for more redistribution of wealth from the productive to the indolent is not befitting a high-brow journal of the Old Right.

Djurdjevic begins with the same slippery premise that has been Marxist dogma since the Reagan years: "the rich are getting richer; the poor, poorer." This is not the case, or, at least, it is not the whole story.

Djurdjevic serves up comparative statistics that slice total family income into arbitrary sections and rails about the increasing percentage that goes to a small number of well-off families versus that which goes to the bottom portion. But these are purely relative measures that say nothing about the real, material well-being of either group. Nor do they reveal the phenomenal recovery of middle-class incomes during the Reagan boom of 1982-89, or their moderate rise after 1994.

On demographic factors that contribute significantly to income disparity, Djurdjevic is silent. The rise of single-parent households and the consequent shrinking number of full-time workers in poor families have affected the incomes of those families. Djurdjevic's figures also account for cash income only, excluding the value of Social Security contributions by employers, pensions, health insurance, and other benefits. Moreover, no consideration is given to the supply-side theory that falling taxes over this period spurred the work incentives of higher-income Americans and lessened their incentive to shelter income.

Djurdjevic's analysis is wholly static, assuming that the people within any given quintile of income in 1977 are the exact same people in 1994. Businesses come and go; employees are promoted and fired; the notion that the American economy is immobile and that its participants are confined to a permanent hierarchy is demonstrable nonsense.

Perhaps most importantly, to the extent that there exists any "dwindling" of our middle class, those departing it are in fact moving *upward*. From 1980 to 1993, the share of families earning $25,000 to $75,000 in constant money fell from 50.7 percent to 47.1 percent, yet the percentage earning under $25,000 remains unchanged from 20 years ago. Thus virtually all of those families "dwindled" themselves into affluence! This is cause for concern?

Djurdjevic's article would probably not have been written a bit differently by Dick Gephardt, but it raises an important question. If he is going to adopt the shrill rhetoric and half-baked statistics of the redistributionist left, how does he propose we address the "alarming" problem? Raise taxes on the rich? Hike the minimum wage?

There is no question that free trade and unchecked immigration have been raw deals for lower-echelon workers, and on that front we should confront our neoconservative allies head on. But we must not buy into the politics of jealousy peddled by our common statist enemies.

*—Shawn Mercer*
*Milledgeville, GA*

There are several facts that Bob Djurdjevic has not taken into account. First, research shows that the actual people in the different cohorts (fifths of the population) are anything but static. Even though the income of the middle fifth dropped by 22 percent, this does not mean that any particular family's income dropped. It may very well have increased enough to put the family in the next higher cohort.

Second, for a magazine that has put as much emphasis on the ill effects of immigration as has *Chronicles*, it is remarkable that the effect that new immigrants have on the lowest cohort's income was not noted. We clearly cannot continue to add many people at the bottom of the earning scale without creating an effect that makes it appear that we are becoming poorer (except at the top, which remains the top). We push the present poor into the fourth cohort as we add immigrants (the very poor) at the bottom (and the fourth to the third, etc.).

Before Mr. Djurdjevic despairs, he



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needs some better data. He would also do well to remember that it is the "rich" capitalists who are creating jobs.

*—Mary Kohler*
*Sheboygan, WI*

## Mr. Djurdjevic Replies:

Shawn Mercer's response to my column is long on clichés and emotion, and short on facts and new information. I trust that the readers of *Chronicles* can separate Mercer's biases from the facts upon which my column was based. I also suspect that the people who know that I have fought against Marxism and Communism all my life will have a good laugh at this reader's insinuation that I am a liberal or a Marxist.

I must, however, correct some factual inaccuracies. My analysis was not "a wholly static one," somehow out of touch with America's economic realities. My column opens with the plight of Marty and Dawn, two flesh-and-blood young people from Phoenix, Arizona, who could not afford to buy Christmas presents for their daughter on middle-class wages, and includes comments by a Washington-based news media editor about the hardships of getting by on a middle-class income in the nation's capital.

Mercer's claim of the "phenomenal recovery of middle-class incomes during the Reagan boom of 1982-1989" must have come from some work of fiction. The Reagan-Bush-Clinton presidencies were indeed boom years—for the Wall Street elite, whose plutocratic cause they have advanced. But they have been a bust for most of America's impoverished Main Street families, such as Marty and Dawn's.

Mrs. Kohler's comment about rampant immigration in the last three decades lowering the average American income is a very cogent one. Not only is this true in a purely mathematical sense, but in a competitive labor market, cheaper immigrant labor tends to lower indigenous Americans' incomes through competition—even if the immigrant doesn't get the job.

In my March 9, 1997, *Washington Times* column, "Plutocrats of the New World Order," I wrote that "the destructive effect of this 30-year process was described in an excellent book on the subject of U.S. immigration, *Alien Nation*, by the British-born editor of *Forbes* magazine, Peter Brimelow. The author explains very clearly why the immigration explosion since 1965 has led to . . . the 'browning of America,' a 'demographic event of seismic proportions.' And why the roots of the immigration lie in the liberal elite's economic interests. Namely, the lower-paid immigrants not just displace the indigenous workers; they help lower the overall wages of the local people by merely competing for jobs."

## On Civil War II

I have a few thoughts on Sam Francis's critique of Thomas Chittum's *Civil War II* ("Prophesying War," June). Dr. Francis's major criticism of Chittum's ghastly scenario is that the power elite will not let it happen, but rather will lead America down the path to Brazilianization. I think he overestimates the power of establishment propaganda and underestimates the American people. There are growing danger signs for the regime, as polls show that a shrinking minority trust the government to do the right thing, compared to a large majority just three decades ago. Given a few foreign policy disasters or some serious economic problems, the country might be ready for a nationalist party of a Buchananite stamp. Granted, the manipulators have been able so far to shut out such a message, but how long can they continue to do so? There is a genuine fear among the elites today that was not present a few years ago. The underlying assumption of the Second Amendment is that an honest and loyal government should have nothing to fear from an armed citizenry, but the elites are in a panic to disarm Middle America. The manipulators appear to be much less confident in their powers than Dr. Francis is.

Dr. Francis argues that the ruling elites that gave us Balkanization will be able to control it, but racial and ethnic loyalties are too strong and intractable, and (as Chittum says) multi-ethnic empires usually die a violent death. As Brent A. Nelson writes in *America Balkanized*, "It is highly probable, given the trends evident in the 1990's, that at some point in the first half of the twenty-first century . . . an unstable mix of First World and Third World peoples, will produce a political crisis of such dimensions as to be insoluble within the traditional limits of American governance."

I don't think that the full-blown civil war that Chittum speaks of will ever come, nor the Brazilianization that Dr. Francis predicts. I think a more likely outcome is that we will come to the abyss, with, say, a full summer of rioting, and it will scare the pants off us. The result will be some kind of peace that involves decentralization and states' rights. The federal government will be blamed for its role in the Balkanization of America and be thoroughly discredited. A happy corollary would be the end of our overseas empire.

*—Jeff Anderson*
*Americans for Self-Determination*
*Arlington, VA*


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**HATE CRIMES** were back in the news this summer. Of course, every crime is a hate crime when considered as a sin against charity and against the divinely ordained institution of human government. To this extent all crimes are equal, yet the United States government, while upholding as always the principle of equality, is attempting once again to get around it in devious and dishonest ways, for its own unspecified ends. Following the much-publicized murder in Jasper, Texas, of a black man, James Byrd, Jr., whom three white men are accused of having dragged to death behind a pickup truck, the Senate Judiciary Committee decided to amplify the body of existing hate crimes legislation. Current federal law applies to crimes "motivated" by the offender's dislike of his victim's race, color, religion, or national origin. The new measure's sponsors, Senators Edward Kennedy, Arlen Specter, and Ron Wyden, would amend it to add "gender," sexual orientation, and disability to the attributes specifically designated by the U.S. government as worthy of special—meaning "federal"—protection from "haters" (apparently legion in this country). Although the Jasper incident was presumably related to racial hatred, not machismo, ableism, or normalism, the committee brought the late Mr. Byrd's daughter, Francis Renee Mullins, all the way from Lufkin, Texas, to lobby for the measure. "I think there should be federal jurisdiction over crimes so hateful," Ms. Mullins testified. "[T]he laws of the land should punish [the perpetrators]."

Meaning Texas law *isn't* "the law of the land"? And punishment is somehow incomplete and unsatisfactory if meted out by a court deriving its authority from a lesser governmental entity than the federal one? Tearful testimony from a bereaved legal simpleton aside, the proposed bill poses all sorts of legal problems, including double jeopardy, the duplication of state laws by the imposition of a federal one, an increase in the already overwhelming burden carried by the federal judiciary—as well as, of course, considerations related to federalist principle and the Constitution of the United States. (Thirty-nine states and the District of Columbia already have laws against hate crimes on the books, and 22 of them include sexual orientation as a protected category.)

There are other reasons, however, to question what is actually going on here. President Clinton endorsed last year's hate crimes legislation, and a lurid rainbow of women's, gay rights, black, Latino, and Asian-Pacific American groups demanded it. Organized females, queers, and people of color work hard to make sure that the American majority spends its time—all of it—thinking about them and their concerns, and the President, who is working to build what he calls "a vocabulary that embraces America's future," is eager that it should. Last year, when three white ethnics beat up a black boy who had strayed into their neighborhood, Clinton flew to Chicago to offer moral support; more recently, he visited Atlanta to dramatize another white-on-black incident in that city. He had nothing to say, however, regarding a spectacular instance of black-on-white crime in which a gang of black youth attacked three young white teenagers who had jumped a freight train going the wrong way and ended up in the slums of Flint, Michigan, shooting all three in the head and gang-raping the girl; or another, where two blacks in Saginaw abducted a white girl, bound her with duct tape, placed her on the backseat of her own car, and drove around town all night offering her to their friends before raping, sodomizing, and killing her, and leaving the body on the railroad tracks. When it comes to hate crimes, some hate crimes are definitely more hateful than others.

But finally, it is simply none of the government's business what Americans are thinking when they do *anything*—or nothing, for that matter. Hate crimes legislation establishes hating as a separate crime from doing, when it is linked to the act of doing. The logical next step—and people who propose laws of this sort are nothing if not "logical"—is to uncouple hating *completely* from doing, which would amount to the legal recognition of thought crime. That is the destination we are headed for with anti-hate laws. If we ever reach it, it will be owing more to the law of unspoken consequences than of unintended ones.

—*Chilton Williamson, Jr.*

**THE LINE ITEM VETO ACT** has been struck down by the Supreme Court. As I predicted in the February issue of *Chronicles* ("Reining in the Feds"), the Court (in *Clinton* v. *City of New York*) declared that the act violated the Constitution's Presentment Clause, which commands that a bill passing both the House and the Senate "shall, before it becomes a Law, be presented to the President of the United States; If he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it, with his Objections." In the six-to-three decision written by Justice John Paul Stevens, the Court reasoned that the line item veto allows the President to create "a different law—one whose text was not voted on by either House of Congress or presented to the President for signature." Though acknowledging that the President does have a limited role in the legislative process, the Court properly concluded that the Constitution does not permit him to enact, amend, or repeal statutes.

In arguing for the Line Item Veto Act, the government asserted that the cancellations were exercises of discretionary authority granted to the President, and that the vetoes were merely executive decisions declining to spend appropriated funds, an act called "impoundment." The government based the first argument on *Field* v. *Clark*, which dealt with the Tariff Act of 1890. Section three of the Tariff Act directed the President to suspend tariff exemptions for certain products if he found that the country of origin placed "unequal and unreasonable" duties on American agricultural goods. But the Supreme Court rejected this argument on three grounds. First, the President's suspension of tariff exemptions was contingent upon a condition that did not exist when the Tariff Act was passed. The line item veto, on the other hand, must be exercised within five days after the bill is signed into law, and thus the same circumstances exist as when Congress passed the statute. Second, under the Tariff Act, the President had a duty to suspend the exemptions



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when he discovered "unequal and unreasonable" duties on American products. In contrast, the President has total discretion—rather than a duty—under the Line Item Veto Act. Finally, when the President suspended tariff exemptions, "he was executing the policy that Congress had embodied in the statute." With the line item veto, the President rejects the policy judgment of Congress.

As for the government's impoundment argument, the Court emphasized the "critical difference" that the Line Item Veto Act "gives the President the unilateral power to change the text of duly enacted statutes." With impoundment, the expenditure is not repealed.

President Clinton, taking time out from Democratic fundraising in Beijing, described the High Court's decision as "a defeat for all Americans," claiming that the Line Item Veto Act "made it much easier to control spending." Republican Senators John McCain and Dan Coats chimed in, arguing that *Clinton* v. *City of New York* "means a retreat to the practice of loading up otherwise necessary legislation with pork-barrel spending." In reality, the 82 items Clinton canceled in the past 18 months saved the nation an estimated $335 million, which is chicken feed in light of our $5.4 trillion national debt. Clearly, the line item veto merely made it easier for politicians to bamboozle the voters by allowing incumbents to claim to be agents of reform.

Never ones to learn from their mistakes, the Republicans have promised to introduce new legislation to circumvent the Supreme Court. The new bill will most likely be a separate enrollment proposal. Under separate enrollment, when an appropriations bill passes both houses, clerks divide the unified bill into thousands of separate bills for presentment to the President. But this is also of questionable constitutionality since Congress votes only once for a mammoth appropriations bill and does not separately consider each of the smaller bills presented to the President.

Of course, if Congress simply respected the Constitution, there would be no budget crisis and no need for a line item veto. Unfortunately, the Republicans' desire to revive the statutory line item veto shows what little respect the ruling elite has for the nation's fundamental law. As Justice Kennedy pointed out in his concurring opinion: "Failure of political will does not justify unconstitutional remedies."

*—William J. Watkins, Jr.*

**THE GM STRIKE** that occupied the headlines this summer may be a portent of things to come, as a new wave of corporate consolidations and trade agreements destabilize the last of America's great industries. Both UAW leaders and outside observers compared the strike to the historic 1937 "Sit-Down Strike" that established a symbiotic relationship between the UAW and General Motors. In exchange for a living wage for its members, the UAW provided GM (and Ford and Chrysler) with a steady supply of trained workers. But this 61-year relationship—or "social contract," as Michigan State Representative Greg Kaza (Republican-Rochester Hills) calls it—is under fire today, as the Big Three, under the pressure of NAFTA and GATT, attempt to restructure the automobile industry.

While union leaders did attempt to stop the passage of NAFTA in 1994, they—and, more importantly, the rank-and-file members—are only now beginning to recognize the changes that global free trade has in store for the automobile industry. While GM denies that it intends to cut back or abandon its American operations, its 1997 Annual Report offers a somewhat different story. Inside the front cover, the report's theme is splashed across three pages: "Go common. Go lean & fast. Go global. Go for growth. GM is going everywhere." Well, perhaps not everywhere. The Annual Report discusses new GM plants in China (Vice President Gore, true to his campaign donors, attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the plant, which will begin production by the end of this year), Argentina, Brazil, Poland, and Thailand. No new plants are planned for the United States. While Pablo Lopez Perez, a worker at GM's truck assembly plant in Silao, Mexico, says, "I like to think there's work enough for everyone," is it any wonder that American workers don't trust GM when it argues that new factories in lower-wage countries don't pose a threat to their jobs?

Between 1995 and 1997, GM's vehicle production in the United States *declined* by 129,000 units, while its combined production in Canada and Mexico *rose* by 161,000 units. That's why this strike had a different feel from those of the past. The *Flint Journal* noted that "what appears to be at the backbone of public support for the strikers is not necessarily a pro-union sentiment, but a legitimate fear of losing local jobs to foreign work forces and technological advances, all in the name of becoming more globally competitive." And while the *Journal*'s letter to the editor column saw its share of management charges and union counter-charges, many of the letter-writers, like Ray Lord of Fenton, put the strike in a broader context: "This historic strike is about decent jobs, about where one can live and be a part of his or her grown children's lives, and about watching their grandchildren mature and be able to work in the Flint area, if they choose. It is about loyal, courageous Americans who want a piece of the pie for themselves and their families."

Conservatives and libertarians simultaneously dismiss unions as a relic of socialism and complain that union workers make too much. There's no doubt that unions have hurt their own cause over the years by protecting deadbeat workers or making demands that the public (and not simply corporate management) finds unreasonable. But autoworkers today are solidly a part of the middle class, and union workers (especially UAW members) formed the core of the socially conservative "Reagan Democrats." Because of union intervention, many autoworkers can support their families on a single income, keep their children out of daycare, and live in the same community that their parents and grandparents did. Those who argue that "efficiency" and the "global marketplace" are more important than these concerns show where their priorities lie.

*—Scott P. Richert*

**THE BOX-OFFICE FAILURE** of *Primary Colors* and *Bulworth*, directed by Mike Nichols and Warren Beatty respectively, has prompted Hollywood executives to view the future of the genre as "dicey," or so says entertainment writer Bernard Weinraub in the June 18 *New York Times*. Mr. Weinraub seemed slightly shocked at this turn of events, since the aforementioned cinematic gems were "critically acclaimed" and had "generated an extraordinary number of magazine covers, television interviews and newspaper stories."

Bernard Weinraub had lifted himself gingerly up on his rhetorical tiptoes to



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avoid saying this: the combined best efforts of the left-leaning world of pop-culture criticism and the left-leaning political media establishment could not generate commercial success (i.e., public validation) for the left-leaning Mike Nichols and the left-leaning Warren Beatty.

Their powerlessness to control public opinion often makes left-leaners both seethe and engage in compulsive fits of rationalization. Hence Mr. Weinraub's summation as to why neither *Primary Colors* nor *Bulworth* "stirred enthusiasm" among moviegoers: "[Hollywood executives] blame the public's dislike of politics and politicians for the [films'] lackluster box-office performance."

Don't you just love it? Hollywood makes millions by appealing to the public's basest appetites, then acts *insulted* when its pretensions to "art" are ignored. In a way, though, it makes sense. The collective sensibility that turns out cynical crud like *Godzilla* and *Natural Born Killers* would automatically expect an audience to be not only grateful for but enlightened by a non-entity like *Bulworth*, a movie that achieves a certain level of "taste" merely by being nothing worse than a leaden conceit. After all, it's not *pornographic* or anything.

There are two points to be made about Hollywood's reaction. First, never blame the customer for disliking your product. Doing so creates a consumer who is not only dissatisfied but alienated. This is simply rudimentary marketing, of course, and you would think the financial wizards of the entertainment business would understand it, even if they don't accept it. Does General Mills get ticked off when consumers reject its latest cereal?

The second point is more complicated and, in this instance, more relevant. According to Mr. Weinraub, Hollywood producers have concluded that "the air waves are so glutted with politicians and scandal that making a movie about a President or Senator in trouble seems redundant. Worse, it seems unentertaining." I think that these executives are seeing it backward. Political movies aren't redundant because we are glutted with politics; they are redundant because politics is glutted with entertainment. Movie politicians like John Travolta aren't uninteresting because real politicians are boring; they are uninteresting because real politicians are now bigger celebrities than John Travolta. To recognize and understand this unique turn of events, the Hollywood establishment need merely cast its gaze upon its most adoring groupie: President Clinton.

Bill Clinton's greatest and most insidious effect on American culture has been to transform the presidency—and much of American politics—into a vehicle of celebrity, "celebrity" being defined in the 90's as being famous for being famous. The first presidential product of modern popular culture, Bill Clinton—baby boomer, Elvis impersonator—didn't just become President in 1992. He also became, in his own mind, a star. And in the same fashion as, say, Madonna, he behaves like a star: consumed by his own awareness that he is being observed. Thus he performs, behaves, and strikes poses—does everything, that is, but *be*. If Clinton's conduct in office reveals anything, it is his assumption that attitude is action. And of course, attitude-as-action—*posing*—is the foundation of popular culture, the base on which contemporary celebrity rests.

So the real question for Hollywood is this: Why pay to watch Warren Beatty, a preening actor, impersonate a politician, when we are forced every day to watch Bill Clinton, a politician, preen like a movie actor? The habits and values of celebrity culture now permeate the presidency; indeed, they now define the presidency. Who needs the fantasy of movie politics when real politics has traded the precepts of leadership for the precepts of fame? Mike Nichols and Warren Beatty, and the industry that financed their self-infatuated little movies, can simply count themselves as victims of their own success.

Bill Clinton has changed, at least for the time he is in office, the standards by which we judge a President. The biggest risk for most politicians is losing the public's trust. We abandon elected officials when they misjudge their obligations or fail at their responsibilities. For Bill Clinton, it's different. His risk is losing the public's attention; he never really had its trust. As our first celebrity President, he faces a situation more similar to Michael Jackson's than to any politician's: When will he become too tedious, too weird, too predictable, too *boring* to care about? When that moment arrives (*if* that moment arrives), Bill Clinton will then embody a second milestone in American life: our first celebrity President will have evolved into our first has-been President. Has-been. It's a term that probably originated in Hollywood.

—*Janet Scott Barlow*

**RICHARD HOLBROOKE** is President Clinton's nominee to replace Bill Richardson as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. This nomination stems from Holbrooke's role in imposing the Dayton Accords on Bosnia and Clinton's desire to exploit such interventions to convert the United States into the world's policeman. Recently, Holbrooke applied his heavy-handed tactics to Kosovo. Holbrooke declared he met with both Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo, failed to negotiate a cease-fire, and implied that an American military response was required to impose a "settlement." Armed intervention was averted, in part, as a result of an open letter by Serbian Orthodox Bishop Artemije which revealed that Holbrooke never met with Serbs. By linking the Dayton Accords with the International War Crimes Tribunal on Bosnia, and then linking Kosovo with Bosnia, Holbrooke presented himself as a defender of human rights interested in prosecuting the crimes of mass murder and ethnic cleansing. His true character, however, was revealed two decades ago, in the "killing fields" of East Timor.

On December 7, 1975, Indonesia, after receiving approval from President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger, invaded the Portuguese colony of East Timor. Lacking the military equipment necessary to overcome the island's mountainous terrain, Indonesia confined its occupation to the coast while most East Timorese escaped to the mountains. The Carter administration, despite its rhetoric of human rights, provided Indonesia with the napalm, "Huey" helicopter gun ships, "Skyhawk II" and "Bronco" attack planes, Lockheed transport aircraft, and Commando armored cars which enabled Jakarta to occupy the entire territory, establish concentration camps, and engage in ethnic cleansing and the systematic torture and massacre of East Timorese. More than one-third of the East Timorese population (over 200,000) died. The official in the Carter administration who lobbied on behalf of Indonesia for those weapons, who justified their use against the East Timorese, and who minimized the atrocities committed by Indonesia was the Assistant Secretary for Asian and



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Pacific Affairs—Richard Holbrooke.

Holbrooke's policy became entrenched. Congress did not terminate International Military Education and Training (IMET) aid to Jakarta until after the November 1991 massacre of over 270 East Timorese by Indonesian troops. However, in March 1997, in testimony to the House Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, the Clinton administration admitted providing Indonesia with military training (including "Advanced Sniper Techniques," "Military Operations in Urban Terrain," and "Air Assault") throughout 1996—the very time Clinton was accepting campaign donations from Indonesia's Lippo Group—in violation of the clear intent of the congressional ban.

While Holbrooke's actions regarding East Timor should be grounds for the Senate to reject his nomination as Ambassador to the U.N., the question of accountability remains. While Holbrooke championed an International War Crimes Tribunal for Bosnia, he fears one for East Timor. As a human rights activist has noted, if such a court is established, one of the first people it will indict will be Richard Holbrooke.

*—Joseph E. Fallon*

## EPICYCLES:

• Preserve, Protect, and Defend: Not content with massive federal land grabs in the name of ecological restoration, President Clinton has set his sights on **America's historical treasures**. In July, Clinton deputized his wife and sent her off on a four-day trip to identify significant national treasures, saying, "Every community in this country has got some piece of itself that needs to endure." (Of course, one might argue that it would be nice if entire communities could endure, but that would undoubtedly interfere with the federal government's plans.) In conjunction with his wife's trip, President Clinton urged Congress to pass the "Save the American Treasures Program." Historical preservationists undoubtedly were confused, however, when Clinton tied their efforts to foreign intervention: "We have all kinds of responsibilities now to the rest of the world we didn't have before, because now the world is yearning for freedom, and there is no Cold War. We must summon ourselves to understand that in the 21st century, preserving everything good about America at home requires us to be more involved with our neighbors around the world than ever before."

• Bean There, Done That: President Clinton's trip to China this summer generated plenty of controversy about . . . **Beanie Babies**? Shortly after Clinton returned to the United States, the *Washington Post* reported that U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky, who is charged with protecting America's trading interests, returned from China with as many as 40 Beanie Babies. The stuffed animals are manufactured in China for Ty, Inc., an Illinois-based company. According to CNN, "the U.S. Customs Service has placed a limit of one Beanie Baby per family for people re-entering the United States." Barshefsky's contraband has a total retail value of approximately $240; on the street, however, she could get thousands for her stash. Barshefsky's Beanie Baby fixation came under fire from Jim Nicholson, the chairman of the Republican National Committee, who declared, "Instead of trying to reduce our $50 billion trade deficit with China, our trade representative was scouring the street markets of Beijing grabbing up every illegal, black market Beanie Baby she could get her hands on." Barshefsky has turned the stuffed animals over to the Customs Service.

**OBITER DICTA:** *Chronicles* is illustrated this month by St. Petersburg native **Anatol Woolf**, who, in addition to freelance work, has designed sets for theaters in Russia and provided illustrations for St. Petersburg Textbook Publishers. Since coming to America in 1987, Mr. Woolf has been a frequent contributing artist to *Chronicles*, as well as to the *Washington Post*, the *Washington Times*, *Policy Review*, *National Geographic Traveler*, *Legal Times*, and *Cricket*. Mr. Woolf works with a variety of materials, from watercolors to pencil to acrylic. Further samples of his work are available on his Web page: *www.netcom.com/~a.woolf/*.

**Lawrence Dugan**, a librarian who lives in Philadelphia, has contributed two poems this month. Mr. Dugan's poetry has appeared in numerous national and international publications, including the *New Republic*, *Southern Review*, the *Spectator*, *Encounter*, *Commonweal*, *Tar River Poetry*, *Irish Edition*, and *Poetry Australia*.

**Wayne Fuller, *The Old Country School: The Story of Rural Education in the Middle West* (University of Chicago Press).** This classic study of the one-room schoolhouse shows that, from the very beginning, school consolidation has led to the dumbing-down of education.

**Laura Ingalls Wilder, *Little House on the Prairie* (Harper Trophy).** The chapters on Laura's experiences as a schoolmarm present a vivid picture of the pioneer schoolhouse in action.

**Edward Eggleston, *Hoosier School-Master* (Indiana University Press).** The life of a schoolteacher has never been easy, as this novel of education in rural Indiana shows.

**Charles Glenn, *Educational Freedom in Eastern Europe* (Cato).** With the collapse of communism, state control of education in Eastern Europe was broken. Glenn examines educational developments—some public, most private—that point toward a new relationship between school and state.

***Hoosiers.*** Forget what you've heard—it's not about basketball, but about the central role that a public school should play in the life of a community.



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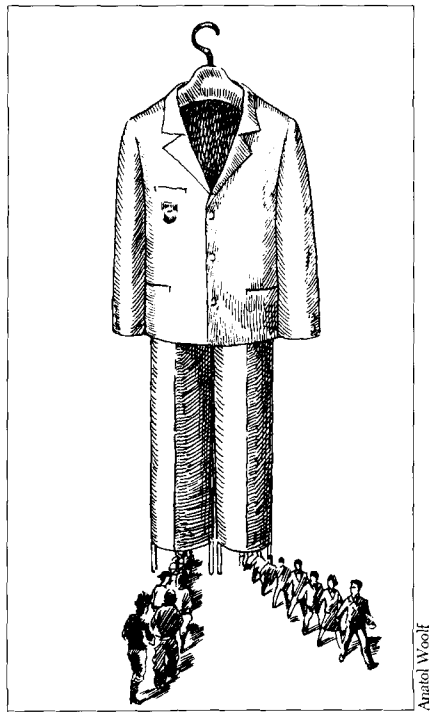


# It Takes a Village

by Thomas Fleming

One of the most popular fads in public education is the reintroduction of school uniforms. In some American burgs, the proposal is greeted with general approval. In many, however, school boards, administrators, parents, and pupils are put through the usual paces of reform, going from unfounded optimism through a stage of unreasoning resistance, and finally to irreconcilable partisanship.

There is a problem, real or perceived, of declining attendance and worsening conduct in the schools. The problem is sometimes, by no means always, associated with an influx of this or that minority, because of immigration or desegregation or urban decline. Someone—an administrator or board member—comes back from a taxpayer-supported conference at Disney World with the bright idea—school uniforms, with or without a boot camp program for young black males in need of role models—and puts it before a board meeting. Community leaders of all ethnicities rise up to endorse the concept, citing all the successes in Milwaukee or some other place no one has been to, but before long the local chain newspaper outlet begins reporting on boys who do not want to cut their dreadlocks or pony tails and girls who regard dressing like a slut as an expression of their inner self. (They are probably right.) Weak-faced parents come forward, whining on talk radio that children today are different from earlier generations of students—they cannot be ordered around. After all, they have rights. Or perhaps it is not school uniforms but an 11:00 P.M. curfew or an anti-drug program that authorizes routine locker searches or a mandatory program of community service that sends suburban teenagers, like so many Lady Bountifuls, into the benighted inner cities where they expect to find servile colored aunties who will hug them and call them "honey chile" for instructing them in the mores of the middle class.

At some point, someone will inevitably hire a lawyer, and before long the outside interests will send in their hired guns to stand up for the rights of people they have never met before, looking for the court case that will put them on the front page of the *New York Times*. You have seen it in your hometown, and if you have not, then you are wise enough not to read the generic chain newspaper that has bodysnatched the *Des Moines Register* or the *Nashville Tennessean*.

After spending nearly 50 years as student and parent, teacher, headmaster, consultant, and pundit, I have reached the not very momentous conclusion about education in America that schools, particularly public schools, are not places where learning takes place so much as arenas where children, their parents, and the agents of the state engage in a three-way battle of opposing rights. Here in Rockford, where we have had the usual posturing over school uniforms, the combat of rights is played out under the nose of the emperor, the federal magistrate who oversees the desegregation order he imposed on an unsegregated city. In the nearly ten years this battle has been going on, I have listened to charges of racism batted back and forth across the Rock River that divides the east side from the west, I have endured endless talk of equity in funding, I have heard about how the poor kids in west-side schools had to use old textbooks and sit at desks their parents used (as if old textbooks were not, in most cases, superior to their replacements and old desks a more palpable connection with tradition than any living muse-



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um), I have seen the endless list of tort fund expenditures to boost the morale of minority students and their parents (including weekend trips to expensive resorts), and I have watched an uneducated superintendent fighting an expensive turf battle with a barely literate "master" for the title of least articulate educationist this side of Chicago. But in all of the official discussion virtually no one has expressed any practical concern for what the students are actually learning apart from the annual ritual of covering up the significance of the test scores, which mean in plain English that no matter how they rig the tests or dumb them down, the gap between rich and poor, black and white stays the same. Not bad after spending only $166 million—over and above the district's regular expenditures—in nine years.

Every once in a while, it is true, a black parent goes on the radio to point out that the deseg remedy is doing nothing for his kids, but whenever he hears a non-black parent complaining about high property taxes, he will turn around and condemn him for racism and indifference. "You want to cut the taxes, but what are you going to do about educating kids who are victims of discrimination?"—as if it were everyman's moral imperative to rear otherman's children. The one voice of sanity has come from an older black man who occasionally calls the Chris Bowman radio program to suggest that his neighbors ought to quit complaining about white indifference and clean up their yards and take care of their kids.

Who is, ultimately, responsible for the education of children? Depending upon whom you ask, you will receive one of two answers: the parents or the state. Homeschoolers and evangelicals typically give the former answer, while professional educationists—when they can afford to be candid—give the latter, and many of the school wars in this century have been carried out as a struggle of individual families banded together against a government that sees parents as an obstacle to the ultimate goal of education, which is to re-engineer Baptists and Lutherans and don't-give-a-damns into model subjects of the American Democracy.

Statists are as alarmed by homeschooling as they once were by private and religious schools. Back in the 1920's and 30's, the disciples of John Dewey hardly took the trouble to disguise their plans to outlaw all forms of private education, openly declaring that no child should be allowed to escape the democratic formation imposed by government schooling. Although the case of *Pierce* v. *Society of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary* taught the educationists the valuable lesson of caution, many public school teachers (including those who put their children in private schools) openly oppose any form of vouchers or school choice on the grounds that they threaten the public school monopoly that is vital to democracy.

But it is not only government teachers and other statists who are suspicious of homeschooling. European Catholics have frequently remonstrated me for teaching my children at home. Children do not belong simply to the parents, they say, because some day those children will have to take their place in society. This view, which goes back through St. Thomas to Aristotle, is not a surrender to the state. On the contrary, it assumes a community rooted in shared experience and a common faith. Both in Europe and here in the United States, it was religious schools that most successfully opposed the state's monopoly over the schooling of children.

The desperate straits in which we find ourselves today are largely the result of over a century of direct state action against the family, an invasion whose trail is marked by acts giving rights to married women, delinquency and child protection statutes, women's suffrage, compulsory school attendance, Social Security, and no-fault divorce laws. At each step in the subjugation of the family, liberal politicians and journalists were able to identify a problem—loutish husbands who abused their authority, greasy immigrants who put their children to work instead of sending them to school, loveless marriages that created an unwholesome atmosphere for growing children—and these social problems served as a pretext for state intervention.

Unfortunately, husbands and wives, mothers and fathers have only been able to fight back with the enemy's weapons, the Jacobinical rights of man, which all have poisoned handles, and we are confronted with the depressing spectacle of the men's rights movement, organizations promoting fathers' rights in radio spots paid for by the Ad Council, and universal declarations of parental rights that are an open invitation to U.N. intervention into domestic squabbles.

Homeschooling and little academies—and the choice plans that are expected to sustain them—may do some good, but we should never lose sight of the fact that they are desperate remedies.

In the school wars, the bad logic of parents' rights usually takes concrete form in proposals for vouchers or school choice. Of course, sensible parents who send their children to private schools will welcome the tax relief promised by vouchers, and no one in his right mind can fail to appreciate the opportunities which the various school choice plans offer to desperate families groaning under the oppressive weight of the public school monopoly. The underlying danger in any national scheme for school choice, however, was revealed some years ago by Charles Glenn in his analysis of European school-choice systems (*Choice of Schools in Six Nations*), and both Lew Rockwell and I have argued—"proved" would be a less modest word—that the net effect of vouchers would be the destruction of private and religious education and the complete empowerment of the national school bureaucracy.

There are metaphysical reasons why an educational philosophy based on a theory of parents' rights cannot succeed, but there is also a practical reason. In any contest with government, individual families can never win in the long run, since the state runs on energy that it sucks from the lives of families and communities. Homeschooling and little academies—and the choice plans that are expected to sustain them—may do some good, but we should never lose sight of the fact that they are des-



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perate remedies. We are like frontier settlers whose last hope lay in the secret cellar where they could hide when the Indians had broken into the cabin. What the settlers needed was a stockade, a fortified community in which they could make a united stand against their remorseless attackers, and what parents need today are communities of friends and neighbors, church parishes and disciplined societies, within which they can defend their common interests.

Typically, it is religious communities—Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist—that have put up the most effective resistance, and while the average Catholic diocesan or Missouri Synod high school might not represent a grand improvement on public education in the suburbs, such schools do offer considerable protection to the families who cluster around them. For several years I sat on the board of a Lutheran school which, for all its faults, was a vivid manifestation of the Lutherans' love for the children of their church community. I resigned my position when I realized that my own classical view of education was ultimately incompatible with the needs of a school whose highest goal was to teach children to be decent and hardworking citizens who would never know more than was good for them. I was foolish enough to think that more could be accomplished.

A few years earlier, I had served as headmaster of a private community school in the South Carolina Low Country. Most of what I know of politics and society I learned in my three years at the Archibald Rutledge Academy. Some men, I found out very quickly, are made for the work, but I am not one of them. It was not enough to design a curriculum, select books, hire and supervise teachers, and teach several classes every term. Even the business end of the job—raising funds, doing the taxes to save the expense of an accountant, helping to organize an annual "Shrimp Festival" at which the mothers raised tens of thousands of dollars—even that was secondary compared with the diplomatic responsibilities I had to discharge: mediating between board members and teachers, teachers and parents, in a village where everyone was related to each other to the degree of second cousin and where half the married couples I knew seemed to be double second cousins, and only I was a complete outsider.

Everything in a village is a national crisis—I use the word "national" advisedly, because it always seemed as if we were living in an independent city-state. The Episcopalians did not like the sermons they were getting from their supply priest (a sociology professor), and they went straight to the bishop to get him removed. A helpful legislator was going to pave the dirt road that led to the dirt road I lived on, and my neighbors and I backed down the state, the mayor, and the seafood docks who wanted a better road for their trucks.

The academy, which had been built by the fathers and supported by the heroic efforts of the mothers, was even more politicized than the churches or the town meetings. I designed the mildest of dress codes—no revealing sun dresses, no T-shirts with offensive slogans—and found myself awakened at the crack of dawn by a farmer whose wife had riled him up before breakfast. When I sent a boy home on Games Day for wearing a sweat shirt with "Divers Do It Deeper" emblazoned on his chest, his mama stormed into my office to tell me I had a dirty mind for reading something obscene into the slogan. This was no sheltered lady, by the way, but a two-fisted drinker who knew how to swear like a sailor.

I stirred up even more trouble by creating a special college preparatory program that required four years of Latin and a four-year history (not social studies) sequence: American, Ancient & Medieval, Modern European, British. One father insisted that his two slow children should be in college prep classes, but neither could apparently memorize the declension of *puella*. I persisted and succeeded in giving several country children a humane education beyond anything they would have received in the most fashionable schools in Charleston.

What I did not realize at the time, however, was that no matter what I did, I would remain an alien, an outsider, a potential threat to the community. One of my first acts was to expel a young hoodlum who was threatening the teachers, and a year later I expelled his older brother after he took a fake swing at my jaw. The kid was built like a gorilla and could have taken my head off. The next year, when he died in a car wreck, drowning face-down in a pool of shallow water, I refused to give the school a day off on the reasonable grounds that the dead young man was not a student. I did agree to let anyone who wanted go to the funeral, but this was not enough to squelch the gossip that I was persecuting the poor boy beyond the grave.

I was trying to set standards and maintain order, and I was not about to encourage sentimental adoration of a violent druggie. But the boy was everybody's cousin or nephew; his poor mother was the sister of the landowner who had given the property where the school stood, and what I refused to understand was that right and wrong, good and bad, do not apply in quite the same way to your cousin's son, no matter what he has done.

I left the next year over some trivial dispute, betrayed by the board members for whose children and grandchildren I had sacrificed several years that I might have spent writing or teaching, and it was only when I left the village that I became aware of how foolish I had been. All little communities are petty places, ruled by gossip and revenge, feuding and back-biting, and while an outsider will always be perplexed and disgruntled by these primitive loyalties, to the natives they are as natural and necessary as the wind and the rain.

Put another way, the village was a commonwealth, something like a Greek *polis* in miniature—albeit disintegrating—and the character of the *polis* was maintained by its peculiar methods of resolving disputes (its "constitution") and its own customs of rearing and schooling children. If I had had 15 years and a good deal more wisdom than I possessed, I might have gradually made a contribution to the village traditions (supposing the village itself were not wiped out by a hurricane or by the invasion of displaced Yankee intellectuals looking for some new place to screw up).

But in rejecting the classical education that would once have been their own ideal, the people of the village were displaying an ability to close ranks against outsiders which is the first defense of a traditional community. Most Americans do not live in villages or even coherent neighborhoods, and it is the object of government today to prevent them from forming communities of resistance around their church or a small-town high school football team. Bigger is better, according to the experts, and consolidated schools afford students more individual choices, more opportunities to become different from their parents. And if consolidated school systems become so oppressive that even the supine American taxpayers get restive, then the experts have to devise scheme after scheme to fix the little problems without ever touching the central question: Why do we have to have consolidated school systems that operate under



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the dual authority of state superintendents and the U.S. Department of Education?

Only a hundred years ago, most public schools were really community schools under the direct control of the parents and relatives who paid the taxes, elected a board from among themselves, and meddled in school affairs with impunity. The simple test of any school reform plan is to ask in which direction it goes—toward or away from the community school. In the case of most voucher plans, the answer is plain: power is flowing to the state capitol and to Washington. With other plans, like charter schools, the answer is not so simple. In some cases, a charter school is simply an educationist's gimmick—an all-computer school, a fine arts school, even a hotel-management high school. These specialized academies divide neighborhoods and contribute to the social fragmentation that leaves us helpless.

But it may also be possible for groups of parents to establish schools that reflect the character of their neighborhood and their ethnic and religious traditions. In time, such little experiments might serve as centers of the community and pockets of resistance against the homogenization being pushed by Republican bureaucrats like Checker Finn and the promoters of the National History Standards.

Most conservatives have learned, now that it is almost too late, that the individual cannot take his stand alone and unaided against the powerful national and international interests that are devouring human communities. What social conservatives have failed to learn is that families are almost as fragile as individuals, especially now that rights legislation has driven wedge after wedge into the chinks between the sexes and the generations. No help can be expected from national governments or from any international agency or movement that wants to save the children or preserve the family—internationalization is the last stage of the disease, not its cure.

It is only by living in communities that we can rear our children in security, and it is only by working locally that we can protect our communities and the schools—public and private—that represent them. Ten thousand battles must be fought over school board elections, bond issue referenda, and local "choice" initiatives, but no single family—or even a list of families on a petition—can win any of them. Only a community can close ranks against the federal judges, experts, and legislators who are taking away our children.

The battle lines cannot be drawn in defense of parental rights. Such tactics serve only to create one more whining minority group dependent upon government (world government, if some have their way). Our ancestors took on an entire continent, village by village and parish by parish, and that is exactly how we shall have to take it back.

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## The Throne of Lies

*by Lawrence Dugan*

*"The idols will perish forever."*
*—Isaiah*

All the talk is informed
We listen for an hour
To the explanation.
The house is ashes.
The resisters following the Texas guru
Are dead, his little Troy is dust.
Radios come to life, cameras roll,
The place is so hot the bodies
Are charcoal. The noise machine designed
To drive them crazy is gone.
The great throne lights up.

Their compound is destroyed
Ploughed into history.
Troy? Carthage is no more.
The survivors are arrested for murder.
The house of lies
Devours the smaller house.
The throne of lies increases.

Speakers explain they are sorry sorry
Sorry . . . she will live with this
All her days, a tattoo
On her resume . . . they have choices
They explain, adjust
Their glasses, call on reporters
Who ask them to explain some more
Who speak from the camp of cameras
Whispering into microphones to us . . .
It was another sex uproar
Another gender outrage another house
Full of people whose numbers
Didn't add up and were crunched . . .
The latest barbarian smiles on the News
Sorry sorry sorry . . .



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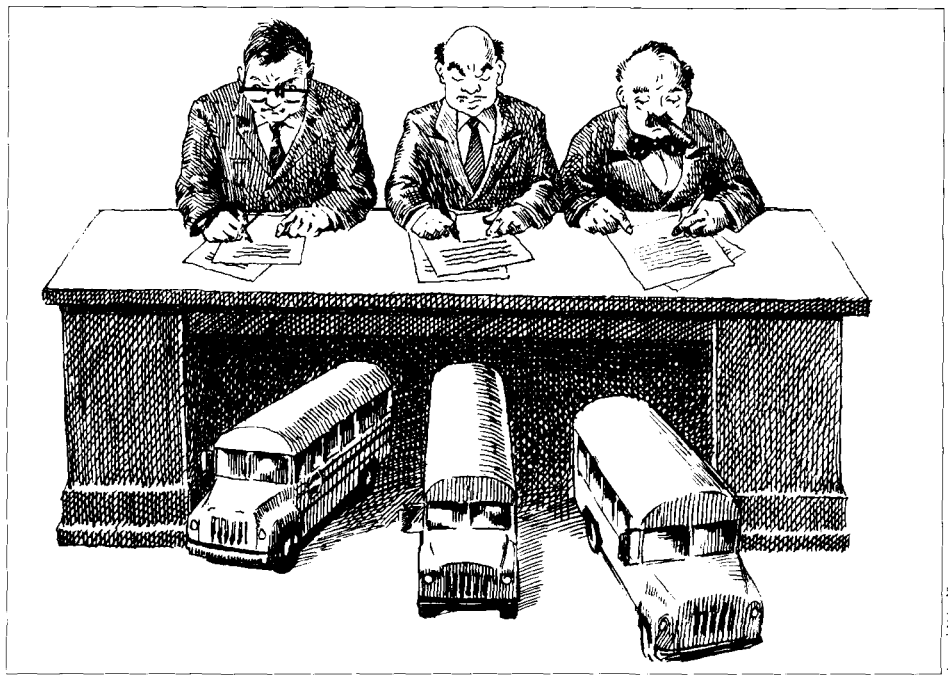
# The Takeover of Our Schools

## A Call to Action

by Joyce B. Haws



Anatol Wolff

*It has become obvious that the majority of elected officials and candidates for public office are not qualified for their positions, and often stand in the way of attempts to institute the programs and diversity that are the hallmarks of modern society. Nonetheless, American voters, either because they are ignorant of what must be accomplished or because they are rebelling against social progress, continue to elect such unqualified persons at every level of government.*

*The judicial branch of the United States Government has therefore determined that, effective immediately, all governing bodies at the local, state, and federal levels will be appointed by federal judges. Court-appointed special masters will oversee all appointed governing bodies. Newspapers, TV and radio stations, and other media are ordered not to publish dissenting opinions on the new government. They will be monitored to ensure that any dissent is shown to stem from either racism or ignorance. All media are ordered to divert citizen attention and energies to matters which will not jeopardize the new government and to emphasize the establishment of successful programs which would have not been possible under representative government.*

*Particular and immediate attention will be given to public education. Elected school boards will be eliminated and programs will be established to train future generations in the judicial form of government. Students will be assigned to schools on the basis of race, nationality, socioeconomic status, sex, height, weight, etc., with the proportions of each determined by expert social engineers. No student will be assigned to any school within ten miles of his residence in order to avoid parental and community meddling in curriculum control and discipline. An appropriate combination of property, income, and sales taxes will be ordered to cover the costs of all programs.*

*It is so ordered.*

Would a government notice like this, delivered to our door or posted in public buildings, shake us up? Or would we even bother to read it?

Before dismissing this "Government Notice," the reader might ask himself if any of it sounds familiar. In hundreds of major cities across our nation, "government by consent of the governed" has been replaced with government by judicial fiat. In those cities, any difference between reality and the message above is only one of degree.

The survival of representative government depends on the courage and determination of elected officials to defend our freedoms and of citizens to hold these officials accountable. But the greatest threat to representative government today is an increasingly arrogant and activist federal judiciary, which—in its quest for "social justice"—all too frequently ignores or nullifies existing state and local laws.

In no area of our lives has "government by judiciary" caused

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*Joyce B. Haws is the director of the Communications Office of the National Association for Neighborhood Schools. Further information about NANS can be found at* www.nans.org.



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more devastation than in our public schools. Federal court takeovers of our school districts have eliminated our ability to monitor and control the education of our children, our most precious commodity and our nation's future. We must monitor closely what our children are taught, how they are taught, and where they are taught. We must control the tax money provided for their education, and a locally elected school board is the best means of such control.

As readers of *Chronicles* know, the citizens of Rockford, Illinois, are caught in a struggle for the control of their schools. A federal magistrate has taken over Rockford's schools and directs the actions and decisions of the elected school board, even ordering board members—under threat of contempt of court, fines, removal from office, and even jail—to vote for higher taxes, taxes that have been found illegal under state law. It is to the Rockford school board's credit that they have appealed many of the court orders, and they have been blessed with an appeals court whose judges (in particular Judge Richard Posner) show rare wisdom and understanding.

But despite these valiant efforts, Rockford's neighborhood schools have been destroyed by a "controlled choice" plan ordered by the court. While "controlled choice" superficially resembles a voucher program, allowing parents to choose to send their children to any school in the district, the reality is that a child is allowed to enroll in the school of his choice only if that child's presence would not disturb the court-prescribed ratio of majority to minority students in that school. A number of students are involuntarily assigned to schools outside their neighborhood. This court-ordered busing on the basis of race, ridiculously parading as "desegregation" and as a remedy for past racial discrimination, is being challenged in court by Parents Against Controlled Choice, a group led by Ron Manns (who is black) on behalf of black, white, and Hispanic students who were denied admission to their neighborhood schools on the basis of race.

But Rockford is not alone. Similar scenarios are playing out in hundreds of American cities, largely unreported beyond the city itself. Not content simply to order an end to any deliberate discrimination, for decades federal courts have been mandating racial control, the very thing they should have sought to end. The public has often been left frustrated and isolated, intimidated by vicious attacks for their opposition to the court mandates. To counter these attacks, the National Association for Neighborhood Schools (NANS) was incorporated in Denver, Colorado, in 1976 by opposition leaders in affected cities. NANS provides the public with accurate information on desegregation cases and suggests lawful ways to end racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic assignment of students, forced busing and the destruction of neighborhood schools, the misuse of taxpayers' dollars, the disenfranchisement of the public, and the use of public schools for social engineering.

At first, in the wake of *Brown* v. *Board of Education*, the courts mostly ordered direct racial assignment to "balance" existing schools, programs, faculty, and extracurricular activities. More recently, the courts have ordered the establishment of "magnet" schools with exotic curriculums and disciplines, selling them to parents by touting the "choices" students are able to make. With choices controlled by prescribed quotas, however, racial control continues even when direct racial assignment slows down. Once magnet schools are established, neighborhood schools rarely return, even when a court order ends.

In August 1996, the National Center for Policy Analysis reported that approximately 800 school districts were under federal "desegregation" orders, but no one seems to know exactly how many nor the status of the cases. The atrocities committed under the guise of "desegregation" in these cities would fill volumes. Federal judges have directed elected officials how to vote, imposed levies to pay for the programs they have ordered, and even stripped authority from elected officials.

On August 31, 1981, during the early days of the Cleveland, Ohio, desegregation order, a federal judge had the school board president and the treasurer led off to jail in handcuffs for objecting to a court-ordered expense. Two years ago, the federal judge stripped all authority from the seven-member elected school board—which consisted of six black members and one white member—and turned the district over to the state. One would have to question how such an action could be considered a remedy for past racial discrimination.

State legislators collaborated in the final demise of the elected school board by passing a law on July 22, 1997, allowing Cleveland's mayor to appoint the board and a CEO—a move that was taken some time ago in Chicago. But while the Windy City is praised nationally for the success of its mayoral control and site-based management, unhappy parents have learned that their wishes do not count. Despite their protests, Chicago school chief Paul Vallas has vowed to continue a controversial busing plan that would have children at bus stops by 6:00 A.M.

The editorial board of Cleveland's only daily newspaper, the *Plain Dealer*, still supports the court rulings that, over the course of two decades, have cost well over one billion dollars in state and local money and destroyed the once-excellent school system. The newspaper even declared that dissenting voices should not be heard, and urged readers to ignore the NANS affiliate in Cleveland. In fact, much of the local media have blamed elected school boards for the devastation of the district and praised the mayoral takeover.

But even the *Plain Dealer* could not be silent on the exorbitant legal fees. "Long gone are the days when anyone seriously thought the plaintiff lawyers were helping anyone but themselves," it editorialized on April 20. The lead plaintiff attorney charges $340 an hour, and the others charge only slightly less.

In 1967, Delaware received national acclaim as the first border state to remove all vestiges of a segregated school system. But in 1978, the Wilmington school district found itself under attack by an activist federal court. A federal judge abolished the Wilmington district and ten suburban districts and merged them into one. Children were bused all over New Castle County. Although the federal court relinquished control of the district in 1994, the busing order remains mostly intact—institutionalized. Over the 19 years of the scheme's implementation, the "achievement gap" between black and white students has *widened*—not an uncommon occurrence in desegregation cases.

Most people have heard about the Kansas City, Missouri, case in which a federal judge imposed taxes—over two billion dollars worth—to pay for his grandiose scheme of costly, elaborate magnet schools, a scheme that failed to lure white students to the district or increase academic achievement. Even with the court-imposed taxes, the plan could not be financed, but the court refused to end its involvement until the district was considered "financially viable." Despite massive budget cuts, reorganization, and school closings, the tax rate needed to re-



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main at the court-ordered level.

Fearing that Kansas City residents would not approve continuing the high tax rate, the state government put the matter to a statewide vote, as an amendment to Missouri's constitution. In other words, the entire state of Missouri would decide what Kansas City residents would pay in property taxes. Outstate voters, weary of making payments for "desegregation" in Kansas City and St. Louis, approved the amendment.

U.S. District Judge Dean Whipple has now tentatively approved a two-year budget designed to end the era of multimillion-dollar "desegregation" subsidies. The budget reflects the loss of $100 million a year from state "desegregation" payments, several school closings, severe cuts to central administration, and significant reductions in busing as many of the elaborate and costly magnet schools are closed or turned into neighborhood schools.

Meanwhile, in St. Louis, Missouri, suburban districts had "volunteered" to become part of St. Louis's "desegregation" plan. They really had no choice: the federal court had made it clear that it would order them to take part anyway. Today, the court and the community are trying to reach a "settlement" in the St. Louis case. In the context of a desegregation lawsuit, a settlement usually means the continuation of forced busing. Even when school districts seem to regain their freedom, however, they often find that it is all too fleeting. Cincinnati, Ohio, had been quietly returning to neighborhood schools, to the relief of both black and white parents. Now the NAACP has filed for the case to be reopened, citing low black achievement scores.

The cases just seem to multiply, and no city learns from the mistakes others have made. Recently in Charleston, South Carolina, a group of businessmen paid Harvard professor Charles Willie $175,000 to conduct a "study" of the Charleston school district. Willie's recommendation? Implement "controlled choice"—the same program that has destroyed Rockford's neighborhood schools. Of course, the businessmen knew the results of Willie's study before they commissioned him—Willie has long been the administrator of Boston's "controlled choice" program. In *The Ivory and Ebony Towers*, Willie states, "I have never understood choosing schools for children based on neighborhoods." Indeed, Willie is much more interested in social engineering than in scholastic achievement. As he proclaims in his book, "If whites are to overcome their debilitating belief in white superiority, they must be tutored through prolonged association with blacks who can serve as mentors during their formative years."

Is it any wonder we are a nation at risk educationally? Is it any wonder our children are not learning when attention is focused on everything but education? When money meant for education is instead poured into the pockets of attorneys, special administrators, "masters," bus manufacturers, and petroleum companies? When there are no longer neighborhood schools to act as hubs of our communities? When race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and quotas take precedence over reading, writing, and arithmetic? When parental support and input is blocked or ignored? When elected school boards are pushed aside to make way for mayoral control, an appointed school board, or a state takeover?

Busing in order to achieve racial balance should not occur under any circumstances. Unfortunately, under current federal law, it may be ordered to remedy deliberate and intentional violations of the United States Constitution, even though the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IV ("Desegregation of Public Education"), Section 401, states:

> "Desegregation" means the assignment of students to public schools and within such schools without regard to their race, color, religion or national origin, but "desegregation" shall not mean the assignment of students to public schools in order to overcome racial imbalance.

Section 407 goes even further:

> Nothing herein shall empower any official or court of the United States to issue any order seeking to achieve a racial balance in any school by requiring the transportation of pupils or students from one school to another or one school district to another in order to achieve such racial balance.

But the Civil Rights Act was modified by the Scott-Mansfield Amendment to the 1974 Equal Educational Opportunities Act, which added the phrase, "*except when pursuing violations of the 5th and 14th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution.*" Courts pursuing violations, then, could order racial balance.

NANS maintains that even under this existing law, state or local school authorities who bus or assign students to achieve racial balance in the absence of a finding of deliberate and intentional violations of the Constitution are violating the civil rights of those students. Moreover, school districts that are released from court control but continue to assign students to achieve or maintain racial balance are also, under existing law, violating the civil rights of students.

Recently, however, lawsuits have started challenging these court-ordered policies. The suit in Rockford by Parents Against Controlled Choice is only one. Challenges have taken place or are taking place in San Francisco, California; Arlington, Virginia; Jefferson County, Kentucky; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Montgomery County, Maryland; Troop County, Georgia; Durham, North Carolina; Houston, Texas; Boston, Massachusetts; and Charlotte, North Carolina.

The results have been mixed. On April 14, a wise judge ruled that the Arlington, Virginia, district was violating the Constitution by using racial preference to admit students. Meanwhile, in Massachusetts, Boston Latin School was sued last year by a white student denied admission under the school's quotas. The district modified its policy, and the matter was settled out of court. The new policy, which still involves racial quotas, was then challenged by another student. In May, the court ruled that the district had the right to consider race in its admissions policy in order to achieve and maintain diversity. The ruling is being appealed.

In 1969, the *Swann* v. *Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* desegregation case, backed by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1971, cleared the way for forced busing across the country. Like many cases over the last 30 years, the *Swann* "remedy" was built around controlled choice and magnet schools.

Last September, a suit was filed by a father whose daughter was denied admission to a magnet program because she is not black. The suit maintains that the race-based admissions policy violates the 14th Amendment and Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. A federal district court judge agreed in March to consolidate that suit with the *Swann* desegregation case. Be-



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cause the school board argued that their magnet school quota policy was necessary under the desegregation order, the suit was then expanded in March to include a challenge to the entire desegregation plan, including mandatory busing.

In April, another group of parents formed COMPASS (Committee of Parents Supporting Students). They are challenging all race-based student assignment policies and seeking intervention in the case. In a sign that he may be eager to end the case, the federal judge has ordered school officials to determine whether Charlotte's public schools still suffer from the effects of intentional segregation decades ago. The school board says that it will argue that they do. While this may seem surprising, school boards in many cities are content to remain under court order, receiving funds that would end if they were released.

Court challenges are important to draw attention to the problem, but we must realize that we are appealing to the very entities that have caused the problem. How can we communicate the extent of federal court tyranny to the millions of Americans who are blissfully unaware? What will awaken the general public, many of whom do not even bother to vote? What can the people do?

The real solution lies in federalism and our system of checks and balances. Congress must assert its authority—under Article III, Section 2 of the Constitution—to rein in the federal courts. Court-limiting legislation should be proposed relentlessly in Congress until it passes. Such legislation must deal not only with court-ordered taxation, but with all of the arrogant court rulings that have stripped away representative government. Meanwhile, states should amend their constitutions (as Colorado did) to forbid racial balancing. The language of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, forbidding busing for desegregation, must be locked into state law. And finally, we must insist on locally elected school boards.

Almost 140 years ago, Abraham Lincoln declared, "The people of the United States are the rightful masters of both Congress and the courts, not to overthrow the Constitution, but to overthrow the men who pervert the Constitution." Those who respect the Constitution and defend neighborhood schools cannot rest until Congress and the courts are once again accountable to the American people.

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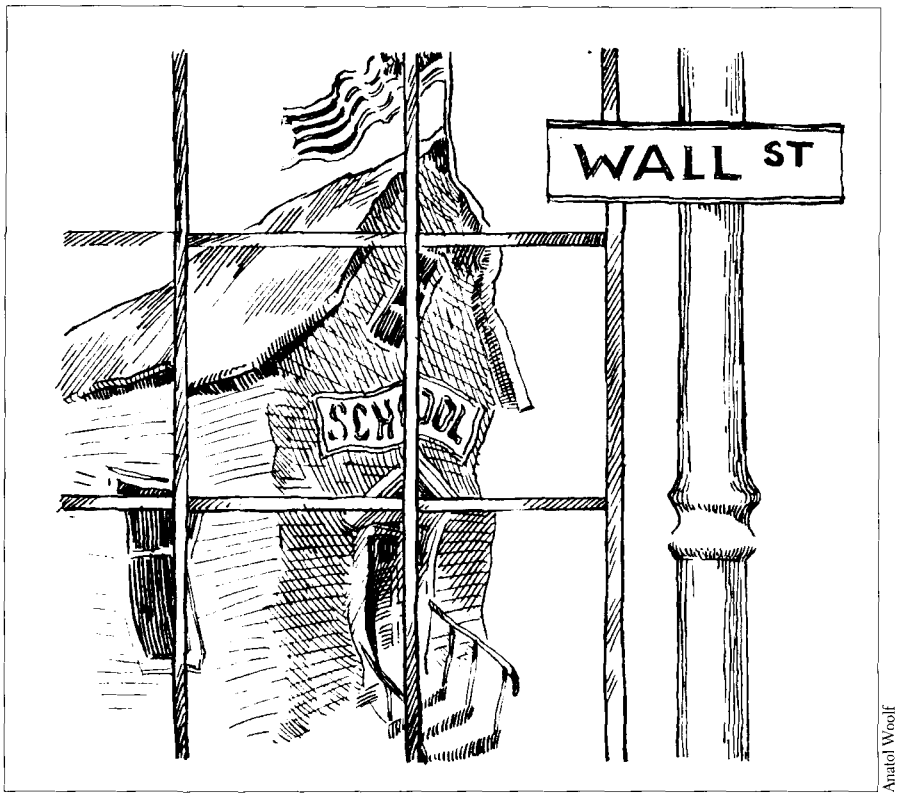
# Funding Public Schools

## The Michigan Model

by Greg Kaza




Anatol Woolf

The most telling moment in *The Agenda*, Bob Woodward's book on the Clinton presidency, occurs when the President-elect first realizes that Wall Street's bond markets wield more power than he does as Commander in Chief of the lone remaining superpower. "You mean to tell me," Bill Clinton screamed at his aides, his face turning red with anger and disbelief, "that the success of the program and my re-election hinges on the Federal Reserve and a bunch of f- - -ing bond traders?" Woodward does not say whether Clinton acted on his campaign promise to lower interest rates by going long on the 30-year U.S. Treasury bond for his own account. Presumably not; Hillary, after all, is the rainmaker in the Clinton family.

The subtext of Woodward's book is that the bond market and the Federal Reserve, in the form of Chairman Alan Greenspan, hold the real power. As the 21st century unfolds, all roads lead to Wall Street, even those associated with American education. Neoconservative policy wonks may fantasize about privatizing the little red school house or propose a "school choice" utopia that resembles nothing so much as the liberal dream of busing. But these think tank schemes, funded by non-profit foundations, are a sideshow; increasingly, the public education agenda is developed by corporations and implemented by politicians who need their campaign contributions.

The public education lobby is stronger, and more broadly-based, than many of its critics realize. It includes not only familiar neoconservative bogeys such as the teachers' union, but corporations that support scams such as those found in the George Bush-created Goals 2000 (like School-to-Work and Outcome-Based Education). Neoconservative mythology holds that the only bulwark against this state of affairs is the Republican politician. But in the real world, these politicians do not wield the real power.

Bush wanted to be known as "the Education President," and so does his successor. "Our number one priority," Clinton told the Michigan legislature last year, "must be to make our system of public education the best in the world." Clinton was invited to Lansing by Republican Governor John Engler, whose property tax cut/school finance plan, called Proposal A and passed by voters in 1994, is seen as a national model by, among others, the *New York Times* and *National Review*. "No challenge confronting our state or the nation is more urgent," Governor Engler told Clinton and lawmakers. "Where our children are concerned, our search is not strictly for a Republican solution or a Democratic solution—but an American solution."

Governor Engler invited Clinton to Michigan because the

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*State Representative Greg Kaza (Republican-Rochester Hills) represents Michigan's 42nd District.*



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two agree on education. In 1994, Clinton signed the School-To-Work Opportunities Act, which uses federal mandates and funding to browbeat public schools into changing their mission. Education's traditional function is to teach basic knowledge and skills: reading, writing, and arithmetic. School-to-Work de-emphasizes academic work and substitutes mandated vocational training to serve the corporate workforce. "The goal is not to graduate highly literate individuals but to turn out team workers to produce for the global economy," notes Phyllis Schlafly.

> In the school-to-work scheme, individual grades are inflated or detached from academic achievement, individual honors and competition are eliminated or de-emphasized, and instead we have such "team" techniques as group grading, cooperative learning, peer tutoring, horizontal enrichment, job shadowing, mentoring and job site visits.

School-to-Work is administered in Michigan by the state Department of Jobs Commission, dubbed the "Corporate Welfare Department" by critics. The line-item for fiscal year 1998-99 is $10.9 million; more than $50 million has been spent on School-to-Work since the program's establishment. The appropriations boilerplate for the program reads, "The school-to-work apprenticeship programs shall link employers, organized labor, educators and community organizations for the purpose of providing necessary knowledge, skills and labor market information to students." Translation: state government will tell students which jobs are available and taxpayers will pay to train them for politically connected corporations. In this incestuous relationship, Big Government climbs into bed with Big Business and Big Labor, two-timing the taxpayer.

Growth in the School-to-Work program mirrors growth in the Corporate Welfare budget. The executive order creating the Jobs Commission was signed by Governor Engler in February 1993. "[I]t is vitally important that there be maximum coordination, accountability and performance-related measures with respect to programs to foster economic expansion and *workforce development* [emphasis added]," the order reads. "[I]t is also vitally important that the Governor develop policies, make and implement legislative proposals, and consolidate and implement programs to foster economic expansion in the State of Michigan." The American Heritage dictionary defines "foster" as to bring up, nourish, or feed. Taxpayers are feeding the Corporate Welfare Department today to the tune of $602.25 million, an increase of more than 140 percent since Governor Engler signed his executive order. Politically connected corporations have applauded the Corporate Welfare Department: they receive the benefits, paid for by taxpayers, of programs like School-to-Work. More than $2.25 *billion* has been spent by the Jobs Commission since 1994.

"Michigan does not need a government-directed industrial policy; it needs leadership that understands and respects the operation of a free market economy," the Mackinac Center for Public Policy argues in a recent publication, *Advancing Civil Society: A State Budget To Strengthen Michigan Culture*. "Instead of focusing on expanding so-called 'pro-business' programs, the governor and legislature should recognize the institutions . . . that generated tremendous wealth in Michigan long before the advent of pervasive government intervention."

The corporate welfare lobby aggressively supported passage of Proposal A. Powerful in Engler's Michigan, its power is greatly reduced on Wall Street, where the bond market rules. The neoconservative dream of Michigan's Proposal A as a national model for school finance is still subject to the bond market's cold, hard judgment.

While Wall Street may have its doubts, others in New York like Proposal A. The *New York Times* called it

> the first statewide, voluntary shift away from property taxes, as a rising national chorus of disgruntled homeowners and civil rights activists seek more equitable ways to provide one of society's most basic services. Education in America has traditionally been seen as a local concern. Hence the reliance on property taxes, which are also less vulnerable to economic fluctuations, to finance school systems. But property assessments within and among states diverge wildly. Across the country, the amounts of money spent on schools based on the taxes derived from those assessments are unconscionably unequal. . . . Now 28 states are involved in lawsuits, many based on state constitutional promises of fairness, that seek to redistribute school aid. . . . Throughout most of the U.S., children in wealthier school districts continue to benefit from superior education while those who live in poorer districts—and who need more resources, not fewer—continue to be deprived. . . . The fact that Michigan voters have . . . tried to make school financing fairer should make other states sit up and take notice.

Put bluntly, the *New York Times* praised Proposal A's *egalitarianism*: it centralizes power in Lansing and redistributes tax dollars from upscale suburban districts to poorer urban schools. But the *Times*' "voluntary shift" was anything but. Proposal A gave voters the option to raise the income *or* sales tax to six percent. They could not reject both: a vote against the sales tax increase would have raised the income tax. Taxpayers likened this to a choice between shooting oneself in the head or shooting oneself in the heart. The opportunity to reject any tax hike was taken away by Lansing after voters defeated a different proposal in June 1993.

Governor Engler was elected in 1990, upsetting incumbent Democrat James Blanchard; his platform pledged property tax relief. His first tax cut plan was rejected by voters in November 1992. After his second one failed in June 1993, Engler was anxious to cut property taxes before the 1994 election. Writing in *National Review*, Northwestern University Law Professor Daniel D. Polsby praised Governor Engler as "a gambling man."

> In the summer of 1993, Democrats, in a ploy to illustrate the supposed intellectual bankruptcy of Mr. Engler's plans, pushed a proposal through the state House of Representatives that would simply abolish school funding through property taxes. Mr. Engler did not blink. He got the state's Republican-dominated Senate to pass the measure too, and then he signed it. And so, in July of 1993, Michigan enacted into law a $6.6 billion deficit in its public school budget, effective as of July 1, 1994, with absolutely no substitute funding provided for. An historic opportunity to rethink the system, said Mr. Engler. Bystanders likened it to jumping off a diving board without



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first checking to see whether there was water in the pool. Under the gun, the state acted, jacking up the sales tax and cigarette taxes to cover the funding shortfall.

But the *National Review* account erred: it was not the state House that created the crisis but the Republican-controlled Senate; the amendment abolishing property taxes was sponsored by Senator Debbie Stabenow (Democrat-Lansing), now a member of Congress. After ending property taxes, the legislature partially restored them amid a crisis that ended in a marathon 26-hour session on Christmas Eve 1993. In addition to raising the sales and cigarette taxes, as Polsby reported, the deal forced voters to raise user fees and utility and real estate transfer taxes when they approved Proposal A on March 15, 1994.

Beware the Ides of March, critics warned. But Michigan voters accepted Proposal A's tradeoff: a property tax cut coupled with a sales tax increase. State Treasurer Doug Roberts proudly notes that Michigan now ranks 38th nationwide in terms of state and local tax burden as a percentage of personal income. In 1993, prior to Proposal A's passage, the state ranked 15th, according to the U.S. Department of Census. Once considered a high-tax state, Michigan's tax burden is now around the national average. Economists say the state could do better, but Governor Engler deserves much credit; he has signed 24 tax cuts into law in eight years. "But the upshot of this political melodrama has not been without controversy," Polsby wrote in *National Review*. "If property taxes were cut, the potential for central control of education from Lansing was increased." Local school officials complain that state officials are deaf to this concern. In an ironic twist, state officials have their own complaint about centralized power: the repeated refusal of Wall Street bond-rating agencies to upgrade Michigan's debt to AAA since Proposal A's passage.

Wall Street, however, has liked much of what it has seen out of Michigan lately. In January 1998, Standard & Poor's upgraded Michigan's debt to AA+. Moody's followed suit in March, raising Michigan's rating to Aa1. Both upgrades represent an improvement from January 1991, when Governor Engler took office. S&P placed Michigan on a "credit watch" that month, noting a budget deficit (since eliminated) left over from the Blanchard years. But both upgrades included cautionary notes. Michigan's strengths, S&P noted, "are mitigated by decreased revenue flexibility and increased funding commitments related to the implementation of school funding reform" and the cyclical nature of the state's automobile industry. "Debt factors are favorable," Moody's reported.

> However, contingent debt issued through the School Bond Loan Fund program . . . continues to grow rapidly and is outstanding in amounts that nearly double direct state debt. Continued careful management of this contingent debt exposure, particularly in the state's financially weakest school districts, such as Detroit . . . will be important to the stability of the rating.

Proposal A addressed the operational side of school finance—the inequities between rich and poor school districts—but it left unresolved the issue of debt. "We have not had a debate on this issue since the 1970's," said Nick Khouri, vice president of Public Sector Consultants, a Lansing group, and deputy state treasurer when Proposal A was written. Echoing Wall Street, Khouri notes that the School Bond Loan Fund "has exploded in recent years, increasing the cost to the (Michigan) budget and creating a potential long-term financial liability for state taxpayers." One of the reasons Khouri cites for "the dramatic increase in school debt" is Proposal A, which "lowered the average homeowner's millage rate for school operating purposes from 35 mills to six. This sharp drop was seen by many school administrators as an opportunity to ask voters to replace part of the reduction with an increase in debt mills."

State Treasurer Roberts concedes Proposal A did not solve the debt issue. In fairness to Roberts, there probably would not have been enough votes to pass a better plan. Half of the Republican legislative caucus—and most of the Democrats—would have resisted a solution. But Governor Engler and Roberts have failed to convince Wall Street to give Michigan a Aaa/AAA credit rating—despite repeated attempts. Wall Street is watching how Engler's administration solves a crisis unraveling in the Detroit school district, where taxpayers approved a $1.5 billion school bond issue in 1994. Roberts will not approve the bonds because Detroit officials have not provided a good explanation of how the district spent the money from an earlier $162 million bond project. Prosecutors last year declined to pursue criminal charges in the affair because they could not determine whether any Detroit officials personally profited from the deal. The decision not to prosecute ended a 20-month joint FBI and state police criminal probe.

The most likely solution to this problem is not political, but financial: debt restructuring, or better yet, shock therapy—an economic czar to clean up the Detroit mess. For Proposal A to emerge as *the* national model for school finance, the debt side of the issue must be addressed in a manner that will be approved by the bond market.

"How many votes does the f--ing bond market have?" complains Howard Paster, a Clinton lobbyist, in Bob Woodward's *The Agenda*. More power than hack staffers like Paster will ever admit. ©

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"It all started when Jennifer Furio, a young mother and a Sunday School teacher from Bellingham, Washington, began writing letters to serial killers—with the hope that they would tell her why they raped and tortured and killed and mutilated women. . . . The letters [from the serial killers], transcribed and reproduced exactly as they were written—unedited and uncensored—are without a doubt unlike *anything* you have ever read—graphic, detailed descriptions of the atrocious crimes they committed."

—*from a press release for* The Serial Killer Letters: A Penetrating Look Inside the Minds of Murderers *(The Charles Press, 1998)*



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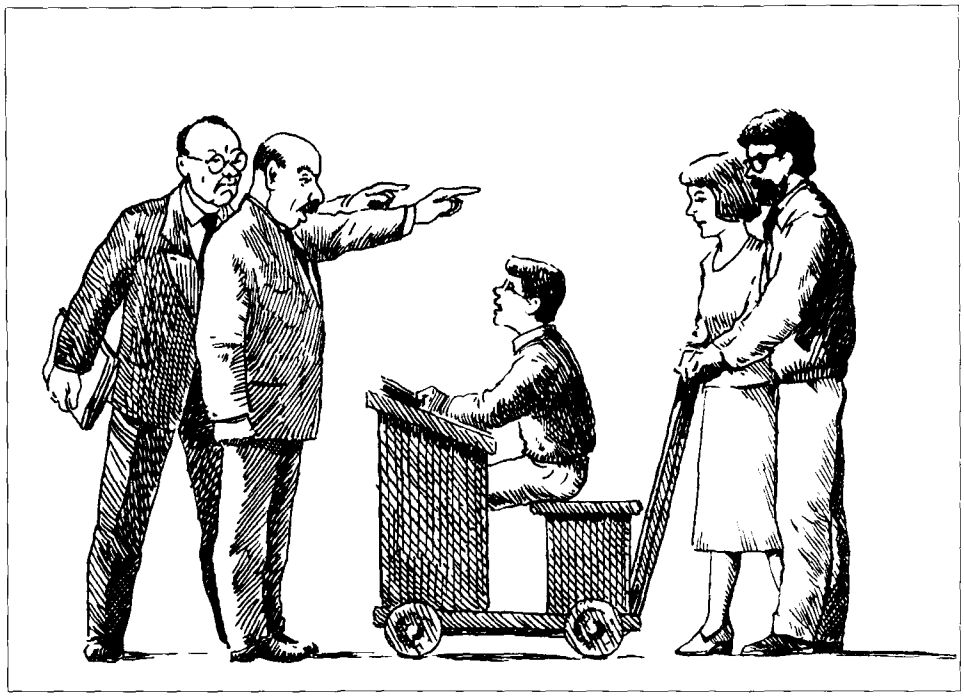
# Market-Driven Solutions to Public Education

by Lisa Graham Keegan



Anatol Woolf

"If we elect new school board members or run for the board ourselves, we can expect improved schools." This is our national misunderstanding.

Nothing in the traditional public school system inherently promotes excellence. Even the free election of school board members—a token nod to democracy—fails to overcome this system's fatal flaws. As a good friend always put it, a bad system beats a good person every time.

The way to a superior educational system is through the exercise of freedom and democracy, national principles that are mocked in our form of public education. In fact, although the structural basis for public schools is elective and therefore "democratic," the system itself is a centrally planned monopoly. We do not elect a board to decide which groceries should be available in the neighborhood, and we would not stand for an elected board to provide all the transportation in our area. So what is democratic about providing a small group of people the exclusive right to decide how and where all of the children in a given area will be educated? The system is fundamentally misguided and should be eliminated.

But a truly democratic and open system of public education is forming. Market-driven solutions to educational problems recognize that the public, as purchaser, has clear and concise requirements that must be met and for which we are willing to pay. While the state provides the funding for public education, it should neither operate schools nor place children in schools. Families must choose their own schools, with the state role confined to oversight and the distribution of information that parents can use in their selection process.

Two major movements are using market-based solutions to reform public education and to shift power away from government and central planners toward students, families, and local communities. Voucher programs offer students the chance to choose schools outside the public system, and charter schools create autonomous schools under contract to provide education. Under both programs, the school is chosen by the family, and state money provided for the child's education is given directly to the school.

The country's few voucher programs have been hampered by legal wrangling over whether students should be able to use them to attend religious schools. Thanks to a recent court decision in Wisconsin, voucher programs will undoubtedly be considered by the United States Supreme Court in its next term. Given a favorable result, these programs should multiply exponentially. Demand for school vouchers is high, and policies are focused mostly on children whose parents could not otherwise choose a private school. Many private philanthropic efforts have expanded the availability of these vouchers while we await a court ruling and more progressive state policies.

Charter schools have caught on nationwide. Since Minnesota established the first ones in 1991, 34 states have followed suit and adopted laws allowing charter schools. Arizona has experienced the most rapid growth in charter schools because we have allowed them to evolve. While other states tiptoe into the marketplace, we have welcomed innovation and have been blessed with board members who understand that the transformation from centrally planned to market-driven schools re-

*Lisa Graham Keegan is the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the state of Arizona.*



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quires a radical departure from business as usual. But what really drives charter schools into existence is demand. In just three years of operation, Arizona has opened over 240 charter schools, many of which now have waiting lists. This demand is not a small issue: it is *the* issue.

Under marketplace reforms, schools only open if they can attract students. The schools are immediately responsive to the clients because they must be responsive. Direct contact with parents as consumers has generated more innovation in three years than could have been forced into the traditional system over two decades.

Before elaborating on these reforms and their effects, let us make a brief comparison between the marketplace idea, which places children at the center of this enterprise, and the current system of central planning.

Public schools are generally governed by elected boards that operate all schools within a particular geographic boundary. These districts have the power to tax on behalf of the schools they serve. Simply put, school districts represent a Soviet form of government. The money raised for the schools goes directly to the central office, where the staff makes the decisions regarding the services that each school within the district will receive. The district office does not apportion money on the basis of students or allow those running each school to make their own decisions. The district funds the needs it sees. Not surprisingly, district offices are rarely the victims of budget cuts.

Most people do not realize that school principals do not control their budgets, and they would be amazed to learn of the favoritism that attends decisions made by the district administration. While there are huge disparities in wealth *between* districts, there are also major inequalities in per pupil expenditure *within* districts because of preferences in the central office that often do not reflect preferences in the schools themselves.

The central office usurps all of the decisions a school should make in order to meet the needs of its clientele: whom to hire, whom to fire, what to pay, how to teach, how to discipline, what to build, what to buy, how to test. These decisions are made one time for every school in the district—perhaps two schools, perhaps 50. A single set of policies governs every institution, with the expectation that one set of decisions can serve all students. But nobody is that smart.

No wonder the politics of public education are so bitter. It is a zero-sum game. If the district administration supports a whole-language curriculum, it will likely employ that for all schools, and those who desire phonetic instruction lose out. This is both anti-democratic and insane. There is no one best way to run a school that will meet the needs of all children or the desires of all parents.

In contrast, market principles provide a rich choice of educational settings for the consumer, and consumer choice brings direct accountability to the system. In the case of charter schools, states with favorable laws can expect an immediate proliferation of diverse and independent schools. The original intent behind charter schools was to allow independence of operation in return for academic accountability. The school must perform on behalf of its students, or it could be closed.

One critical feature of this approach to public education is that any school desiring charter school status can apply directly to an independent board, rather than to the board responsible for all other schools in the area. Some states claim to allow for charters, but require schools to gain charter status from the board which previously ran their school. This is like having a manager from Burger King walk into McDonald's and request to set up a small burger bar in the corner. Obviously, these requests are seldom granted, or are granted with strings sufficient to defeat the purpose of seeking independence. States that allow for independent boards (such as the state board of education or a university board) to issue charters have received—and granted—many more requests.

Another feature of a strong charter law is that the school receives the total tuition a student would have received in a traditional public school. Many states provide an incentive to school districts to create charter schools by paying the district the full amount per pupil, but requiring them to pay only part of this to the charter school. This maneuver illustrates the political strength of school governing boards, but it does little for the fledgling charter school.

Finally, a strong charter law grants schools the freedom to operate. Charter schools enter into a contract with their sponsoring board, and this contract should allow for all management decisions to be made by the school. Freedom to hire and fire staff, to operate at a profit, determine curriculum and class size, and to act on any other issue that concerns the daily running of the school should fall to the school itself. The sponsor should require that the school admit all students without preference or tuition, and ensure that state academic standards are met. In addition, the sponsor should exercise some minimal but certain financial oversight.

Such laws have spawned a myriad of new options in public education. Some charter schools offer traditional classrooms with stringent discipline and parental contracts for expectation; others offer Montessori instruction, long an offering in the private sector, but rarely adopted for public schools; and several charter schools have been started by leaders in the minority community, specifically targeted at inner-city youth.

Traditional district schools have been affected by this movement. As students move away from the district, income declines, and the districts have had to respond. District schools are now running marketing campaigns in an attempt to attract parents. The district schools have adopted some of the successful strategies of the charter schools, implementing new styles of instruction such as the traditional classroom or Montessori.

The predictable tension creates both positive and negative pressures on the schools. Charter schools certainly receive a higher degree of scrutiny, as opponents and proponents both seek to validate their opinions. But it will take years to know what changes are truly having the most impact, and attempts to summarize this movement after three years of operation here in Arizona can include only trends, not conclusions.

These trends are promising. State tests indicate that charter schools are competitive and that student achievement often outpaces student performance in the traditional public school setting. Parental satisfaction is much higher, and attendance is significantly better in these schools.

In Arizona, there are no signs of a weakening of demand for charter schools, and since our student enrollment grows by approximately 25,000 pupils per year, there is plenty of room for new school growth. In fact, new partnerships are forming between home developers and charter school operators to place public charter schools in some new neighborhoods. Home developers are aware that high quality schools benefit their home price. In addition, charter schools are often more flexible than



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traditional schools when it comes to agreements for school cost contributed by developers, or other requirements generally sought by city councils to benefit new communities. For the first time, the local school district has a competitor for school development in new communities, and that is good news.

When marketplace principles touch a centrally planned system, expect fireworks. Those who have learned to operate in and profit from the current system will not easily let go, nor should we expect them to, but we must guard against their attempts to forestall this change. As the number of market-driven schools expands and the challenge to the old system becomes real, we expect the opposition to become more vicious and less concerned with fact.

A perfect example of this is the claim that market reforms "resegregate" the public schools. This accusation, which comes from several colleges of education across the country, ignores both fact and reason. Anyone who understands public education knows we segregate schools by neighborhood, and where attempts are made to force integration, we shamefully segregate by expectation.

I can think of few actions more cynical than the national practice of enticing white students into largely minority campuses with high expectation course work such as the international baccalaureate curriculum or other rigorous offerings. A close look at many "successfully integrated" campuses reveals that, while the diversity of the student body may have increased, minority students remain in consumer math while white students receive a rich and challenging curriculum. Meanwhile, at a charter school down the street, the population is nearly all African-American, but by parent choice. The school expects students to achieve at high levels, and so they consistently outscore the traditional public schools around them.

I raise this issue as an example of why it matters that we focus on facts rather than inflammatory predictions and false claims. We must continue to speak the truth about what is happening to students in our schools, and not be cowed by those who speak in polysyllabic apology for a system unworthy of our children's futures.

Centrally planned systems are indifferent to mediocrity. Public education falters because it is centrally planned. If we do not acknowledge this fundamental flaw, we fall prey to ridiculous excuses: not enough money invested, too many broken families, poor education colleges, leftist/rightist political influences, and so on. While these may indeed be hurdles, they are not the causes of the inferior system to which we cling.

We are moving into an educational marketplace. Those who believe that there is "still time" to reform our centrally planned educational systems ignore the fact that while there may be time, there is no reason to do so.

Nothing improves without cause; no system immune to consumer response can sustain itself; and competition creates innovation. We have already lost too many children to our national hand-wringing. It is time to move on to something new. ·c·

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## St. Malachy's

*by Lawrence Dugan*

Southeast of Temple
But not a university
Parish; old Irish

Windows commemorate
Families as green
Now as the shamrock

Window over the
Baptistry. I've
Known one white

Woman who lived
In this neighborhood,
The daughter of

A merchant marine,
Gone color-blind
At sea, I guess,

Who wouldn't move.
She has, but
Journeys back

To the dark
Glens of stained-
Glass when the

Arctic valleys
Of office land
Become too cold.



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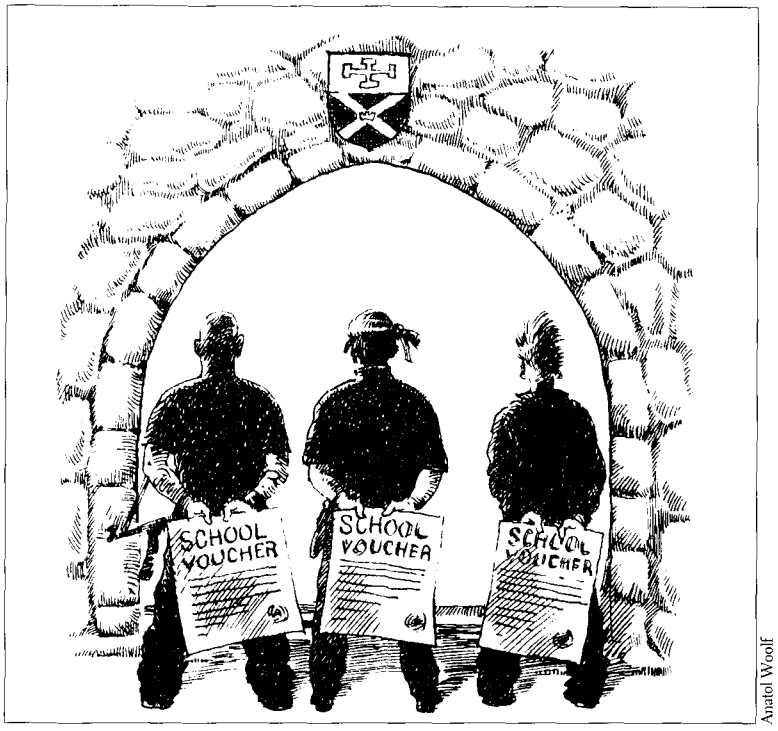
# Flies in the Ointment

## The Problem With School Vouchers

by Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.




Anatol Woolf

Supporters of school vouchers are jumping for joy over a Wisconsin Supreme Court verdict, handed down this summer, that permits tax dollars to be used at religious schools. They hope the decision will be the basis of a vast expansion of vouchers (four other states are debating this same question), eventually leading to a federal voucher program to "privatize" all education.

But there are flies in this ointment, enough to cause conservatives to rethink all the sympathies they have for vouchers. For the court did not rule that religious schools can receive government money with no strings attached. It ruled narrowly on the Milwaukee program itself, which only passed muster because of its rigid restrictions. Those who actually read the decision will find that in order to receive vouchers, religious schools will have to surrender all control over admissions and gut any doctrinal teaching.

What are the problems with vouchers? First, there is the eligibility criteria for students. The money is not available for the children of middle-class parents who actually pay the taxes that support the public schools. It is available only for those the government defines as "poor," the very group that already enjoys vast subsidies in the form of free medical care, housing, daycare, food, and cash. Vouchers represent not a shrinkage of this welfare state but an expansion, the equivalent of food stamps for private school.

What's more, vouchers are available only for children currently in public school, which creates perverse incentives and strikes at the heart of fairness. Parents scraping by to pay their child's tuition at a parochial school get nothing, but the next-door neighbor, who lets her kid founder in the streets and the public schools, gets a full scholarship. Parents will have every incentive to rip children out of private schools and put them back into the public ones temporarily, just to be eligible for the program.

And what about middle-class kids in the private school? We know how much animosity small freebies like meals for some but not others create in public school. What about free tuition at private schools for some but not others? No matter how you slice it, vouchers represent more welfare, another free lunch for the underclass. And there is no point in hiding the racial element here, since voucher advocates have not been shy about touting it. Vouchers are for poor blacks. Whites have to pay their own way into private schools, plus pay for public schools, plus pay for vouchers for eligible blacks to attend private schools. This is not a prescription for racial harmony.

Second, vouchers will have a disastrous effect on the schools, which will not be allowed to choose which voucher students they can accept. Catholic schools cannot pick Catholics over Mohammedans. Single-sex education is out. Nor may schools consider a history of abject academic failure or even violence. In fact, the court underscored that schools are prohibited from exercising any judgment whatsoever about the students they take in (except that they may give preference to siblings). As Justice Donald J. Steinmetz, writing for the majority, said in these startling sentences, beneficiaries are to be "selected on a

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random basis from all those pupils who apply and meet these religious-neutral criteria." And again, "the participating private schools must select on a random basis the students attending their schools."

That's right: random admissions, somewhat like public schools. The inability to pick and choose among students, and kick out students who do not cut it in academics or discipline, is one of the reasons public schools are in trouble. Apply the same rule to private schools, and you go a long way toward making them carbon copies of the schools so many are anxious to flee.

Look at the demographics of the students receiving vouchers in the Milwaukee program. As reported by Daniel McGroarty in the *Public Interest*, 60 percent were on welfare, 77 percent had no father at home, and all were "very near the bottom in terms of academic achievement" with "a history of behavior-related problems." Do we want these kids crashing the private schools of the country, and doing so at taxpayer expense? No wonder Polly Williams, a black nationalist and far-leftist, is celebrating.

Nationally syndicated columnist Pat Buchanan, who inexplicably joined Williams in cheering the Milwaukee decision, still wondered how paying parents will react "when Little Alvin the Drug Dealer, with his gold chains and Glock semi-automatic, and his fellow gang members, show up at the new school, $5,000 vouchers in hand." Vouchers, he further speculated, may

> serve as visas to new turf for hoodlum kids who made those inner-city schools the war zones some have become. What happens when a boy at Bible Baptist is sliced or stabbed by a "voucher student" at gym or some little girl is molested?

Third, regarding the religious content of the curriculum, the Wisconsin state legislature added an "opt-out" provision that prohibits a private school from requiring a student "to participate in any religious activity if the pupil's parent or guardian submits to the teacher or the private school's principal a written request that the pupil be exempt from such activities." The existence of this provision helped persuade the court that there was no violation of the U.S. Supreme Court's *diktats* about church and state. But this betrays an astounding ignorance of the way many religious schools teach. There is no such thing as a "religious activity" separate from the general learning program of the school (as there might have been in public schools before the Supreme Court prohibited even that). The very purpose of these schools is to weave religious values into the process of learning.

When these schools teach reading, among the books they select is the Bible, and nearly all readings will have some religious lesson behind them. When these schools teach history, the history of religion is integral. When they teach art, they use religious imagery. When they teach science, they include biblical accounts of God's hand moving in the creation of the world. In these schools, literature means, in part, learning about religious writing.

The court's mandate requires that the religious side of the curriculum be distinct and separate from the secular curriculum, and that the secular side be large enough to prepare students to pass standardized tests. In practice, this will require any supposed religious school to model itself on non-sectarian schools or public schools, and to do so in opposition to the parents who are shelling out tuition money precisely so their children will have their faith reinforced.

Prayer will be allowed, so long as ample time is provided for "opting-out" students, even if there is only one, to leave the classroom. And can the teacher make casual reference to religious doctrine in the course of the day without first permitting opting-out students to cover their ears? And what about something as simple as a crucifix or a copy of the Ten Commandments on the wall of a classroom? Is looking at them a "religious activity"? In that case, they must be taken down, just as they were in Catholic universities taking government money in the 1940's.

> Vouchers have much in common with socialism. They both rely on government plans, government-issued coupons, vast expense, and invasions of private space. We can even think of the Soviet economy as having been fully voucherized.

Keep in mind that these are only the first round of restrictions. Inevitably, there will be new challenges to the particular practices of these religious schools, and if the courts continue in the direction they have been heading for 50 years, religion will be systematically banished. In order to avoid lawsuits, schools will err on the side of caution by voluntarily cutting the heart out of their programs.

This is why David Frum, writing in the *Weekly Standard*, is so startled that any conservative would support vouchers to begin with: "Voucher advocates intended to bring the virtues of the private school into the public sphere; there is a much more real risk that they will instead inflict all the vices of the public sphere upon the private." Because control follows tax money, vouchers guarantee that the whole system of private education will eventually be absorbed into a gigantic government-funded blob, with the only pockets of diversity being schools that refuse any subsidies at all, though they will then be frequently outcompeted. This is precisely what happened on the university level, with a disastrous homogenization and dumbing-down.

There is another kind of "choice" program that does not involve the private schools. It permits public-school students from one district to attend the public schools of another district. This would presumably force schools to compete for students. But this plan is actually more monstrously left-wing than anything the left would have dared dream. It would make it impossible for good schools in successful areas—whose resi-



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dents pay the lion's share of the taxes that run their schools—to keep out the failed or violent students from across town who are constantly clamoring for a free ride.

Of course, if a town wants to abolish its school districts, it should be free to do so. But there is a reason they do not. District borders work like fences between houses. They help keep the quality of schools as high as possible, and land values stable. That the advocates of school choice cannot understand this demonstrates how completely out of touch they are with the present state of education across most of the country.

Besides, the question of public-school choice is appropriately dealt with only at the local level. As the choice advocates begin to promote a federal effort to abolish—by force—school districts around the country, they can expect to be denounced, hated, and opposed by every middle-class parent, and rightly so: public-school choice is merely another name for busing, but on an unimaginably huge scale.

Vouchers have much in common with socialism. They both rely on government plans, government-issued coupons, vast expense, and invasions of private space. We can even think of the Soviet economy as having been fully voucherized. Officials stole your money, told you what to buy, and issued tickets that allowed "choice" among available goods. School vouchers do the same, and will work about as well.

The idea of vouchers originated on the neoconservative right with Milton Friedman, but increasingly the left has figured out that vouchers represent their dream come true: special privileges for the poor, an expansion of the welfare state, the elimination of exclusive admissions, and the destruction of anachronisms like schools that still teach religious truth. The result is an unholy alliance of big-government libertarians and equality activists of all stripes to rob us of what remains of our educational freedom, and to do so in the name of serving up ever more of our tax dollars to the underclass.

Meanwhile, the advocates of vouchers are busy trampling on decades of conservative attacks on the "right to a quality education," a slogan of the left now recklessly tossed around by the Institute for Justice and the rest of the Beltway cabal. Conservatives must be aware that the language of voucher supporters is drawn from an alien tradition that has no regard for limiting power or protecting property, and no appreciation for the natural inequalities of social position that are an inherent part of a free society. True equalization of educational opportunity would require yet another round of judicial activism to override neighborhood, town, and state jurisdiction, as well as the distinctions between producers and non-producers, which is apparently what the leaders of the voucher movement advocate.

These days, we are almost never spared the tyrannies of the judiciary imposed on us by leftist egalitarians who think nothing of robbing us and abolishing our right to self government. Must we also suffer this fate at the hands of left-libertarians and neoconservatives stupefied by egalitarian fantasies of state-subsidized racial uplift? Not if the people have anything to say about it. Proposition 174 in California, a model piece of voucher legislation backed by all the usual suspects, crashed and burned at the polls for the very reasons I have laid out here. But now the activists are cheering on the courts to destroy private schools and what is left of decent public schools, at our expense.

Just as bad, vouchers reinforce the twin evils of public education: involuntary funding and compulsory attendance. As Mark Brandly of Ball State University has pointed out, compulsory attendance laws not only violate parental rights, they allow government to define what a school is, and therefore to outlaw such developments as small, informal neighborhood schools, where one uncredentialed mother would teach arithmetic and another reading, and then switch places or take time off, helping with money instead. Such arrangements would surely take the place of homeschooling in a free market, since most mothers are not cut out for full-time teaching. Yet today, such alternative schools are illegal. Vouchers do nothing to end that situation, and, in fact, they lead in the opposite direction: toward more draconian regulation.

The free market always provides the most choice and parental satisfaction. But the real free market is not a phony "competition" using tax dollars—which denies choice to the taxpayers—but an educational market in which parents are responsible for paying for their own children's education. The free ride at taxpayer expense has not worked in any other area of social and economic policy. We should not expect anything but harm when the same theory is applied to education.

Until we get a real free market in education, conservatives need to revisit an older agenda. Get the federal government out of education. Decentralize all funding and decision-making to the states, and then to the local level. Scale down school districts to the neighborhood level, as they were in the 19th century. As for private schools, including home schools and cooperative groups of homeschoolers, oppose any restrictions whatsoever. This is a huge but urgent agenda. The push for vouchers is not only a distraction; it is destructionism masquerading as freedom. c

## LIBERAL ARTS

### HISTORY TODAY

"CORE SEMINAR IN HISTORY: This course is designed to provide first year doctoral students with an overview of the three thematic areas emphasized in our Ph.D. program: women, gender, sexuality, and reproduction; nation-state and civil society; and empire, modernity, and globalization. Readings will focus on the evolution of key concepts employed by contemporary historians, such as gender, class, nation, race, and modernity. Books to be assigned may include: Thomas Laquer, *Making Sex*, E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, Donna Harraway, *Primate Visions*, Steve Stern, *The Secret Life of Gender*, and Albert Chandler, *Scale and Scope*. Students will also be asked to read and report on a book written by a Stony Brook faculty member that deals with one of the three thematic areas."

*—from the Fall 1998 Graduate Course Descriptions, State University of New York, Stony Brook*



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# Greatheart!

by Mark Royden Winchell

*"The 'Tycoon.'"*

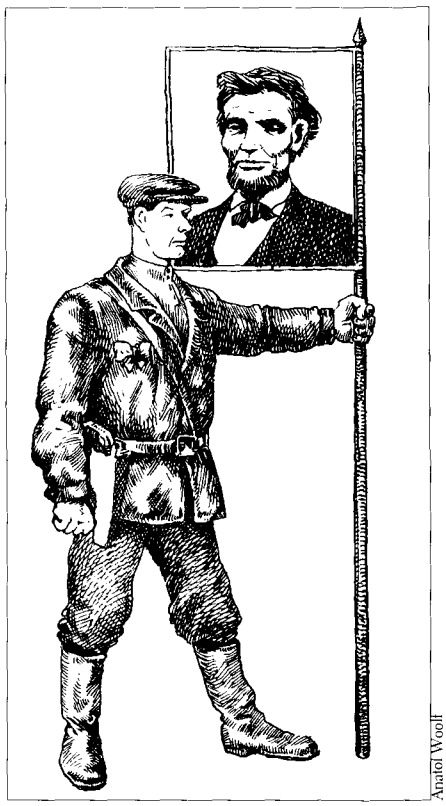
—J.G. Nicolay and John Hay
(Secretarial nickname for President A. Lincoln)

**Lincoln, The Man**
*by Edgar Lee Masters*
*Columbia, South Carolina: Foundation for American Education;*
*498 pp., $29.95*

**Booth: A Novel**
*by David Robertson*
*New York: Anchor Books;*
*326 pp., $23.95*

◆

In the foreword to *Brother to Dragons*, Robert Penn Warren writes "historical sense and poetic sense should not, in the end, be contradictory, for if poetry is the little myth we make, history is the big myth we live, and in our living, constantly remake." This statement seems particularly relevant to the persona of our 16th president. Whenever mainstream historians rate our greatest chief executives, Abraham Lincoln is usually ranked first—because he saved the union and freed the slaves. (Whether those objectives could have been accomplished by some measure short of a war that cost 600,000 lives is a question rarely asked by Lincoln hagiographers.) Often with little understanding of the historical figure and what he really believed, political opportunists from the far left to the neoconservative right claim the Lincoln legacy. When American Stalinists went to Spain to fight for its communist government in the 1930's, they formed the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. When Newt Gingrich wanted to launder money for his partisan purposes six decades later, he used a dummy foundation for underprivileged black children named after the Great Emancipator. It can be said of Lincoln what Orwell said of Dickens: he is "well worth stealing."



Anatol Wolff

But Lincoln is far more than the most widely coveted patron saint in American politics. He has come to embody our national identity to the point that his legend is virtually synonymous with the big myth we live. Thanks to literary gushmeisters from Walt Whitman to James Agee, he is also an abiding presence in the little myth we make. When Americans of a certain age think of Lincoln, they see Raymond Massey in the film version of Robert E. Sherwood's reverential *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*. (With little change in characterization, Massey later played John Brown in *The Sante Fe Trail*.) Even Southern partisans such as Thomas Dixon, Jr., and D.W. Griffith have gotten in on the act by portraying Lincoln as "the Great Heart" who would have welcomed the Confederate states back into the union much as the forgiving father celebrated his prodigal son's return to the old homestead.

While George Washington had his Parson Weems, Lincoln was blessed with an even more talented myth doctor in the prairie populist Carl Sandburg. In his six-volume beatification of Lincoln, Sandburg assured us that humble beginnings and lifelong adversity could not suppress true greatness in this most democratic of nations. The vision of America as a classless meritocracy is as old as Ben Franklin and as recent as Lee Iacocca, but Lincoln's passage from the log cabin to the White House is its most memorable embodiment. In being both extraordinary and representative, Sandburg's Lincoln is the perfect American hero. But in between the appearance of Sandburg's first two volumes (*The Prairie Years* in 1926) and his last four (*The War Years* in 1939), another prominent American poet, Edgar Lee Masters, published *Lincoln, The Man*. This book, first released in 1931, has been as vilified as Sandburg's has been celebrated. Now that it is once again in print, thanks to the Foundation for American Education, we can see why.

Born in Garnett, Kansas, in 1868, Masters grew up in Petersburg and Lewistown, Illinois. He was thus of a time and place to have known several individuals intimately acquainted with Lincoln in his pre-Mount Rushmore days. The most important of these was William Herndon, who had been a law

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partner of both Lincoln and Edgar's father, Hardin Masters. Up to the age of 43, Edgar Lee Masters himself pursued the profession of law. In 1892, after a year of college, he passed the Illinois bar and moved to Chicago, where he eventually formed a partnership with Clarence Darrow, which lasted from 1903 to 1911. Like his fellow Midwesterner Sherwood Anderson, Masters abandoned a conventional career in middle age to follow the literary muse. His reputation rests largely on *Spoon River Anthology*, a collection of poems published in serialized form in 1914 and 1915.

Although Masters is often lumped with Vachel Lindsay and his fellow Lincolnographer Carl Sandburg, two poets born in Illinois a decade after Masters, his sensibility was radically different from theirs. Sandburg and Lindsay, like Whitman before them, subscribed to a kind of mystical populism, which romanticized a collective abstraction known as "the people." (One of Sandburg's most characteristic collections of verse was entitled *The People, Yes.*) Both poets proudly positioned themselves on the left wing of the political spectrum. In contrast, Masters was a states' rights populist. Neither as poet nor political thinker did he ever view "the people" apart from their rooted lives in a local community. Masters was also an anti-romantic realist. In *Spoon River Anthology*, the dead (William Herndon and Ann Rutledge among them) speak from beyond the grave, often in contradiction of the pious epitaphs inscribed on their tombstones. In much the same vein, *Lincoln, The Man* is a work of monumental impiety.

Masters uncovers no significant new information regarding Lincoln. At the outset, he freely confesses his debt to two previous Lincoln biographers, Albert Beveridge and his old family friend William Herndon. (*Time* claimed that Masters had written the 112th life story of the Great Heart.) Masters is interested less in rehashing known facts (although he does plenty of that in this 500-page tome) than in arguing for a particular, and highly unfashionable, interpretation of Lincoln's life. Citing such Confederate texts as Pollard's *The Lost Cause*, Stephens' *Constitutional View of the War*, and the work of Jefferson Davis, Masters writes:

> These could call Lincoln a sophist and a usurper, only to be smiled at by the rich and populous North, the North of poets and historians, and great captains, and the statesmen of a new regime of political control, of a government made a nation from a confederacy of states by the glorious acts of an army headed by Lincoln!

These are the words of a copperhead who, like his contemporary Robert Lee Frost, never forgot that he was named in part for a figure of Southern myth.

Lincoln may have been a poor boy (Masters stops just short of branding him white trash), but his economic views were always in sympathy with the monied interests. Masters traces his philosophical lineage to Alexander Hamilton, a would-be aristocrat who could never quite erase his origins as a "West Indian bastard." Lincoln's own great hero was the senatorial deal-maker and national compromiser Henry Clay. A sort of 19th-century Bob Dole, Clay believed in a mutually beneficial partnership between corporate wealth and a highly centralized federal government. Like his fellow Whigs, Lincoln supported a national bank, high tariffs, and "internal improvements." Had he been brighter and more industrious, he probably would have ended his days finessing the law for some predatory robber baron rather than trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored.

If Masters has nothing but contempt for Lincoln's Whiggish sympathies, he attributes all sweetness and light to the agrarian tradition exemplified by Thomas Jefferson. (*Lincoln, The Man* appeared less than a year after *I'll Take My Stand* and received one of its most positive reviews from Andrew Lytle in the *Virginia Quarterly Review*.) Wishing to leave no doubt about his own political loyalties, Masters dedicates his book "To the Memory of Thomas Jefferson." He sees the Lincoln administration as the final triumph of economic and political centralization—in short, of the Hamiltonian vision. "The history of America since the day of Lincoln," Masters concludes, "has been nothing but a filling in of the outlines of implied powers, which Lincoln did more than even Hamilton or Webster to vitalize; it has been nothing but further marches into the paths which he surveyed toward empire and privilege."

Not content with reviling Lincoln's politics, Masters finds fault with virtually every aspect of his character. Praying and reading the Bible while belonging to no church, Lincoln, in Masters' view, possessed all the vices but none of the virtues of a religious fanatic. Unrestrained by any theology, he saw himself as the instrument of God's will and used biblical rhetoric to sanctify actions that fell beyond the bounds of human justice and prudence. Lacking in normal human sympathy, he refused to visit his father's deathbed. Even the story of his love affair with the doomed Ann Rutledge (which Masters himself did much to promote in *Spoon River Anthology*) is judged improbable. When he agreed to wed Mary Todd, he initially stood her up at the altar. Mary, however, was not to be denied. Like Hillary Rodham more than a century later, she was an ambitious girl from Illinois who saw the makings of a future President in what others took to be nothing more than a pushy bumpkin.

Masters is such a thoroughgoing iconoclast (or "Lincolnoclast," as *Time* called him) that one is left wondering how such a banal mediocrity as Lincoln could have become the most influential political figure of the past two centuries. One would think that it requires superior abilities to accomplish great evil; however, the Lincoln Masters gives us seems no more prepossessing than the eminently forgettable figures who preceded and followed him in the White House. Thus, in explaining Lincoln the man, Masters leaves the myth that the man spawned more inexplicable than ever.

If Father Abraham remains our national god, then the man who shot him is surely the American Antichrist. Because demons are usually more interesting than deities, one approaches David Robertson's novel *Booth* with high expectations. Following the example of Gore Vidal in *Burr*, Robertson rewrites an important chapter in American history from the ostensible villain's perspective. But Robertson does not portray John Wilkes Booth as a martyr or even try to elicit our sympathy for this deeply troubled man. Indeed, he shows us that Lincoln was not the only casualty of Booth's dementia. Like the Prince of Darkness himself, Booth had the power to assume a pleasing shape, and he used that power to con some of life's losers into doing his bidding. Today, we are apt to think of political assassins as anonymous wretches desperate to achieve no-



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toriety by gunning down a public figure. Booth, however, was a celebrity long before his fatal encounter with Lincoln. It was his co-conspirators—Lewis Powell, David Herold, and George Atzerodt—who more closely resembled the Lee Harvey Oswalds and James Earl Rays of our time. Booth was more like O.J. Simpson with a political agenda.

Robertson tells his story through the voice of John Surratt, the most normal and the longest-lived of the Booth conspirators. When Robertson began work on his novel, he was struck by the fact that Surratt, who died in 1916, lived long enough to have seen Lincoln's assassination depicted in D.W. Griffith's classic film *The Birth of a Nation*, which premiered in 1915. Robertson therefore sets his novel in April 1916, less than a week before Surratt's death, and introduces the filmmaker as a character in the book; Griffith's attempts to enlist Surratt's aid in a movie on Lincoln that he is contemplating (and which was actually produced) cause Surratt to reflect on the events of over half a century earlier.

Booth's perverse power, as Robertson depicts it, lies in his ability to satisfy the vicarious needs of others. Powell, Herold, and Atzerodt were all skid-row types who had been destroyed by either the war or life itself. In playing the role of patron and surrogate brother to these young men, the glamorous Booth captured their unquestioning loyalty. Although the fatherless John Surratt also fell prey to Booth's charm and benefited from his influence, he placed limits on both his devotion and his service. Consequently, he is the perfect narrator for this book—a character who is involved with the main action but stands at a sufficient distance to comment honestly on it. (It also helps that he survived into the second decade of the next century.)

The most aggrieved character in Robertson's narrative (as well as in historical fact) is John Surratt's mother, Mary. One of only a handful of women ever executed by the federal government, Mrs. Surratt was almost certainly guilty of nothing more than having known John Wilkes Booth. Even in the brief affair that Robertson imagines between her and Booth, Mary comes off as a lonely widow whose temporary weakness of the flesh brings her more anguish than pleasure. The affair, in turn, motivates John Surratt's break with Booth.

Initially, one is encouraged to see Booth as a man deluded into thinking that his quixotic plot to kidnap Lincoln will bring an end to the national bloodshed. Once peace is declared, however, Booth must murder the President, ostensibly to redeem the honor of the South, but actually to play out a personal death wish. Up to the last moments of his life, Booth is a more consummate actor offstage than on. Whether with the men who shared his false friendship or the women who shared his bed, Booth always knew how to play an audience. His betrayal of the people who felt closest to him ultimately seems more real and more damning than any wrong he inflicted on a nation he never claimed to love. If, as many historians believe, Reconstruction was harsher because of Lincoln's death, the final victim of Booth's treachery was the South itself.

If his encounter with Booth was the worst thing that could have happened to Lincoln the man, it was one of the best things that could have befallen Lincoln the myth. One can only speculate about what would have occurred had Lincoln lived to serve out his second term. No doubt he would still be ranked high by presidential historians, who are always ready to be impressed by politicians who come out of desperate times on the winning side. Still, I suspect that the Lincoln of legend would not loom quite so large in our national imagination. In depriving us of the real Lincoln, who would have faced challenges in the next four years nearly as severe as those of the preceding term, Booth gave us the Lincoln who might have been. This figure is not the Old Testament God of the war years but a benevolent New Testament deity, who would have united us all—North and South, black and white—around the table of reconciliation and brotherhood. Thanks to Booth, we are able to believe that the wounds and bitterness that have plagued this nation since April 14, 1865, would never have existed had Lincoln only lived. Booth's spectacular crime—committed on Good Friday, no less—can be treated as a kind of *felix culpa*, which has allowed us as a people to imagine so great a redeemer.

Curiously enough, Edgar Lee Masters himself created a fictive Booth seven decades before the publication of David Robertson's novel. In his book of poems *Gettysburg, Manila, Acoma* (1930), Masters depicts Booth anticipating his final performance. In what is surely unintended irony, he declares:

> God! If I die, send my mother word
> I died for my country. . . . Now I mean to do,
> And do alone what armies could not do.

## LIBERAL ARTS

### HEALING RACISM

Dr. Charles Willie, a professor at Harvard University, is an educational consultant who designed the "controlled choice" busing plans for Rockford, Illinois, and Boston (among other cities). While most proponents of busing argue that it must be done to benefit black children, Willie, in *The Ivory and Ebony Towers* (Heath, 1981), argues that the real beneficiaries of desegregation are whites: "Blacks do not have the right to hoard the liberating methods that they have developed through years of suffering. . . . Whites must be taught about honesty, justice and altruism and learn how to be merciful, forgiving and trusting. Whites can learn to overcome their enslavement to the false idea that they are supreme only if they have the privilege of living as a trusting minority."



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# A Generous Man

by Charles Edward Eaton

*"Poetry is the language of a state of crisis."*
—Stéphane Mallarmé

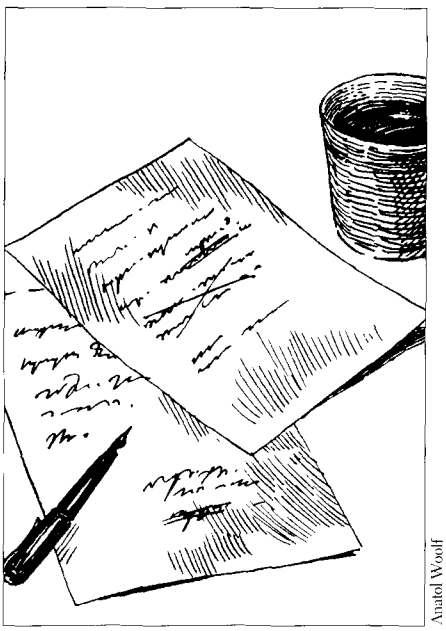
**Days of Our Lives Lie in Fragments: New and Old Poems, 1957-1997**
*by George Garrett*
*Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press; 222 pp., $26.95*

◆

One of the most important things to say about George Garrett is that his is a generous talent, not limited or confined by a narrow point of view. It is as though he has been searching for the meaning of life in many ways and modes of expression, including novels, short stories, and critical studies, to give only a partial list. And, of course, poetry, always poetry: *The Reverend Ghost* (1957), *The Sleeping Gypsy* (1958), *Abraham's Knife* (1961), *For a Bitter Season* (1967), *Welcome to the Medicine Show* (1978), and *Luck's Shining Child* (1981). The present volume, *Days of Our Lives Lie in Fragments: New and Old Poems, 1957-1997*, is a judicious selection from these collections and 30 new poems, spanning over 40 years.

Garrett has always been something of an "outsider," refusing to go along with contemporary dogma both literary and political, at the same time that he has been in his amiable way an "insider" with a wide acquaintance among writers, and wishing, one feels, that he could assume the impossible role of peacemaker among the warring factions that distress our times. Consequently, he is a seminal figure reflecting our contemporary restlessness as he searches for some kind of rapprochement, not finding it altogether but not giving up either: "there are things so beautiful / and strange the mind can't hold / them though it wrestles" ("The Angels").

*Charles Edward Eaton's 14th book of poetry,* The Scout in Summer, *will be published later this year by Cornwall Books.*



Anatol Woolf

The title of the new collection is well-taken, faintly echoing T.S. Eliot's "These fragments I have shored against my ruins." The poems encompass all the variety one could wish for: poems about everyday experiences, a moving tribute to O.B. Hardison, the brilliant scholar who died too young, poems that refer to such literary friends as Brendan Galvin and John Ciardi, among others. One catches one's breath, and continues: poems that illustrate a wide interest in literature and art, the quotidian in tandem with the lofty and extraordinary. A lively and sympathetic interest in his students is apparent, and he must be a delightful teacher. The remarkable poem, "Out on the Circuit," is an account of the underlying horror of giving a poetry reading that should curl the hair of any ambitious young poet. And yet one feels that he carried off the mission with aplomb. There are many other examples in the book of Garrett the survivor, who has been able to make his way through the circumstances of our times, experiencing them but not being overwhelmed by them. In another life, he might have been a diplomat, wary and watchful, looking for a sane and civilized solution to many of our problems.

It is worth noting that without the modishness of the "confessional" poet, an informal, non-chronological autobiography emerges from these "fragments" as they accumulate. We learn of the many places he has lived, his devotion to wife and children, his love of women in general—few contemporary poets have written so lyrically, and sometimes voluptuously, about them. In the delightful poem "Grapes," we learn that he has been a soldier in Tuscany and, in the final poem of the book, "Holy Week," that he is a religious man. "The Magi" and other biblical poems confirm this fact.

Technically, the poems are smooth and fluent, employing a free verse that is not all that free. The early poems make an adept use of rhyme and meter, and they are an echoing presence in the later work. You feel that Garrett could easily slip back into rhyme if the occasion and subject were right and that he would not be awkward or ill at ease in doing so. One remembers that Amy Lowell, the Mother Superior of Imagism, insisted that the young poet should have a firm grounding and practice in traditional poetry before attempting free verse. In any case, Garrett is not prejudiced only in favor of untrammeled liberty, and would probably not argue with Byron's dictum: "Easy writing makes hard reading." The conviction arises from the poems that he knows all the fashionable creeds and attitudes about technique but can put on blinders when he wants to, and that he would not quarrel with Wallace Stevens' notion that the only useful thing to be said about technique is that the poet should be free in whatever form he uses.

Surprisingly, the Southern landscape does not hover in the background in many of these poems by a native Floridian. Urbane and cosmopolitan, rather than regional, Garrett does not belong



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entirely to any actual place or landscape of the mind (unlike Robert Frost, whose North of Boston is a constant background and who could say of himself early on: "they would not find me changed from him they knew— / only more sure of all I thought was true"). But then, perhaps, our fragmented society requires a more roving perspective, a kind of going here and there. There is no doubt that Garrett has "gotten around," "made the scene," and extracted as much as he could from these experiences, dismal though they sometimes were.

But, for the most part, the lasting aura of the poems is genial, and gives off the glow of a pleasant man who remembers the essence of Isak Dinesen's "I do not come for pity, I will come for pleasure." This is rare enough among literary personalities to be worth emphasizing. Too often we admire the work, and, alas, deplore the author.

Has Garrett found life, particularly the literary life, worthwhile and satisfying? Yes and no. We find him constantly aware of the loss of traditional values with little else of value to put in their place. A number of poems convey the sadness and cultural malaise of Rainer Maria Rilke's "Each torpid turn of the world has such disinherited children / To whom no longer what has been, and not yet what is coming, belongs." At the same time, as I have suggested before, there is an incurable optimism in Garrett's nature in spite of the cultural stranglehold. After a poem about "gray thoughts dark laughter cold words" ("Pathetic Fallacy"), followed by "Gray on Gray," he gives us a very happy poem indeed, brief enough to quote in its entirety:

How It Is How It Was
How It Will Be

How it is
on the next day after
the blizzard
how the sky clears blues brightens
cloudless and clean with the old
moon
floating here and there quiet and
grinning
and the quiet fallen snow
glinting winking glittering
(is there one and only word for it?)
with abundance opulence
extravagance
of (one and only) sunlight
how my breath and the river's
do steam and ghost and
shimmyshake
in this purely cold air
how now we know
that we shall surely live forever
how now we want to.

Perhaps his credo emerges best of all from a poem entitled "Postcard," which, ironically, is a good deal longer than any postcard I ever received, but then, as I have said, George Garrett is a generous man:

"Dear World, though I have
loved you
and lost you, times beyond
counting,
still I write upon this instant in
receipt
of all your ordinary music to
inform you

that I can't live without you.
I intend, by God, hell and high
water,
sleet or snow and the wheel of
fortune,
to come back for more of the
same. . . ."

This is enough for any man to believe in these days. The dust jacket states that Garrett's reputation rests mainly on his fiction. This fine collection demonstrates that it should include his poetry as well.

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# Low-End Education

*by James Hill*

**The Teacher Unions: How the NEA and AFT Sabotage Reform and Hold Students, Parents, Teachers, and Taxpayers Hostage to Bureaucracy**
*by Myron Lieberman*
*New York: The Free Press;*
*305 pp., $25.00*

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Not too far from my house in Phoenix, Arizona, stands a Christian school that may just say everything about the educational reform debate in this country—and why it is so often impossible to make any sense of it, in particular. One assumes that what this school has to offer is back-to-basics education, superior teachers, a library of good books, and computer labs hooked up to the Internet: all things a parent would demand before shelling out tuition for a private education. In fact, the school's main appeal seems to be its easy access for sport utility vehicles, especially the mega-sized Suburbans and Expeditions so favored by the *nouveaux riches* these days.

Meanwhile, in the far reaches of the suburbs where retirement communities offer security and companionship for "only" $90,000 and up, the *anciennes riches* complain of having to pay taxes to support a nearby, largely minority school district that must go back to the voters time and again to raise money to build more schools and modernize existing classrooms. In the past, the seniors' tactic has been to turn out in large enough numbers to vote down every attempt at funding those bonds. Now they wish to secede from the district and be done with the hassle so as not to interrupt their rounds of golf, while the state legislature continues to debate how it will bring the public schools into compliance with a state Supreme Court order mandating an "equalization" of capital funding—a nearly impossible chore if local control of school districts is to be maintained.

These senior citizens differ in one critical way from the Expedition drivers unloading their children at the Christian academy. The yuppies have made the decision to go private from concerns for status, their children's educational opportunities, and their safety; perhaps even for religious reasons. Yet they are content to continue funding the public schools through their taxes. Many of them might even be among the sizable crowd who tell pollsters that yes, indeed, the public schools should be equally funded. One never knows, after all: the law practice could collapse some day, and Junior might have to be educated among the great unwashed.

The problem, of course, is that "equal" funding too often implies a uniform mediocrity that destroys the choice parents have always had when it comes to public education: namely, of moving to a richer, safer school district in order to escape court-ordered busing, over-centralization, the disintegration of older districts caused by falling property values and the loss of highly taxed industries, declining test scores produced by an influx of immigrant children, militant teachers, and so forth. No wonder, therefore, that religious academies are beginning to sprout in the "burbs." Unlike the old folks in their golden ghettos, parents who have moved into suburban districts only to find the schools there unsatisfactory cannot so easily launch a secessionist campaign; instead, they look for a safe haven. Perhaps, if the children can get better instruction and their chances for acceptance at a better-than-average college are improved, the investment will be worth it even if the cost is an arm and a leg (not to mention the mandatory Suburban). Yet this entirely free-market approach to education reform does little actually to reform education; indeed, it may be impeding it by gradually removing more and more of the general public from the necessary business of running the public schools.

Not that the public majority was ever involved in the first place, having long since been shunted aside from its community responsibilities. Federal judges have been running some districts for decades now. Political correctness, not community influence, all too often determines everything from setting the curriculum to choosing textbooks to maintaining extracurricular activities. In the predominantly minority Oakland, California, school district, black English, or Ebonics, was pushed through briefly as an accepted language for instruction before the board retreated amid a nationwide outcry.

How public education reached this miserable condition is a question rarely raised and almost never answered, although we have been dancing around it for years now. The usual response has been to advocate simple cure-alls that bring us to a brief, feel-good consensus: spend more money in order to raise teachers' salaries, reduce class size, tap the federal treasury to fund before-school (and now after-school) programs. Yet classes are still considered too large by the President of the United States, among other people. Schools continue to cut back their curricula, most notably in music and other fine arts. Decades of preschool instruction have produced millions of children who cannot read at the third-grade level when in the third grade, or in high school. Most assuredly, though, teacher incomes have increased, largely by reason of inflation and the unionization of the teaching profession.

Teachers, of course, are grossly underpaid. Compared to auto repair, computer programming, or street-corner drug dealing, teaching is a low-end occupation. And teachers enter into their profession knowing full well that it likely will always be a low-end occupation, no matter how much they groan about being under-paid and under-appreciated. Teachers who are more willing to market themselves according to the laws of supply and demand—by moving, say, to a state where the pay ranges are considerably higher—can be rewarded more handsomely. But that still leaves Mississippi and other low-pay states with teaching jobs to fill, and applicants lining up to fill them. So there is something to the argument that teachers aren't compelled to choose their miserable lot, and if such people choose to take a vow of poverty in the interests of the commonweal, then they will obtain their reward in the hereafter.



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Absent real reform, such as education vouchers that would allow those folks who drive secondhand Toyotas the opportunity to shop around for a better place to educate their children, people continue to demand cure-alls, while hoping the bill won't be too high should they actually succeed in obtaining them. The teachers, however, are demanding more—especially from the federal government. President Clinton, in his State of the Union address this year, called for another 100,000 of them, as if staffing the schools had suddenly become a federal responsibility (and as if demographics has anything to do with it). "What counted was (and is) subjective perception, not objective reality," Dr. Lieberman writes in *The Teacher Unions*.

> Just as the unions of professional athletes strive to convince their millionaire members that the latter are being mistreated by their employers, the teacher unions persuaded the most highly paid teachers that they were being mistreated by school boards.

Much of Dr. Lieberman's work could be called having an ax to grind, and bully for him that he does. His book sets out an ambitious premise, and it largely succeeds because Dr. Lieberman sticks to the subject that he knows best. He painstakingly chronicles the rise of both the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers, and the politicization of both organizations to the point where they now stand as among the most powerful of unions, still on the upsurge at a time when other trade unions have all but withered away.

As he demonstrates, such clout pays the unions—both of them supposedly bipartisan—big dividends, especially when it comes to matters concerning the Democratic Party. By helping elect "pro-teacher" candidates to everything from local school boards to the Oval Office, the unions assure that their issues (many of which have nothing to do with education) will be heard and, most likely, become public policy. More insidiously, such politicking also shuts out real debate on education reform, since any legislature packed with representatives who won office with teacher union endorsements is likely to dismiss reformers as being "anti-education."

However unwittingly, therefore, Dr. Lieberman's book may be a strong incentive for the reader to throw up his hands on education reform, enroll his children in a private school, and visit the nearest Chevy or Ford dealer to price the new Suburban or Expedition.

*James Hill writes from Scottsdale, Arizona.*

# The Smutty Professor

***by Daniel J. Flynn***

**Kinsey: Crimes & Consequences**
*by Judith A. Reisman*
*Arlington, Virginia:*
*First Principles Press;*
323 *pp.*, $24.95

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Fifty years ago, Indiana University professor Alfred Kinsey launched what was perhaps the first salvo in the Sexual Revolution. *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, the work of Kinsey, Wardell Pomeroy, and Clyde Martin, hit postwar America like a sucker punch. Claiming that 85 percent of American males engaged in premarital sex, 70 percent had paid for sex with prostitutes, and between 10 percent and 37 percent were homosexual, the Kinsey Report revolutionized American law, culture, education, and a host of other areas. Critics of the report were to Kinsey what the Church was to Galileo. Kinsey was, after all, a "scientist."

The picture of Kinsey that has been passed on by college texts and popular histories is that of the disinterested scientist whose research is unimpeachable. In David Halberstam's *The Fifties*, Kinsey is "prudish," "old fashioned," and "the very embodiment of Middle American square." Rutgers University professor William O'Neill praises Kinsey in *American High* as a "hero of science"; those who pressured the Rockefeller Foundation to cut his funding won "a victory for small mindedness." William Manchester's Kinsey in *The Glory and the Dream* is "an objective investigator," "a stickler for explicit detail," and a "disciple of truth." "As a scientist," said Manchester, "[Kinsey] had naturally played no favorites."

Kinsey, as we know now, was a very different kind of "scientist." A homosexual, a wife-swapper, a sadomasochist, and perhaps a pedophile, Kinsey was much more involved in his work than the keepers of the tablets would have us believe. The real Kinsey loaned his wife out to other men. His attic served as a personal pornographic movie studio. His fellow researchers, Pomeroy and Martin, also served as his sex partners. So powerful was Kinsey's addiction to masochism that an incident where he strung a rope around a pipe, tied the noose around his genitals, and leapt off a chair hospitalized him for weeks and may have helped cut his life short.

Kinsey's bizarre personal life provides a motive for why he attempted to uproot the sexual mores of mid-century America. *Kinsey: Crimes & Consequences*, however, demonstrates just how he skewed his data to get the results he desired.

Although the total number of men he studied is in dispute (estimates range from 4,100 to 6,300), at least 1,400 members of the sample group were prison inmates. For Kinsey and his fellow researchers, basing their survey on the inhabitants of an environment that is a notorious breeding ground for perversion was still not enough to skew the data to their satisfaction. By developing key contacts in the urban gay subcultures of Chicago, New York, and other big cities, Kinsey was able to interview hundreds of homosexuals—and procure sexual liaisons for himself.

Reisman demonstrates that this same kind of statistical trickery is pervasive throughout his study of women. Prostitutes, for instance, were reclassified as "married women" in *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*.

The keystone of Reisman's work, however, continues to be Kinsey's role in the abuse of hundreds of children. Attempting to prove that humans are sexual from birth, Kinsey collected data on at least 324 (and perhaps as many as 2,000) children. Infants as young as five months old, said Kinsey, achieve "orgasm" after being stimulated by "partners." Symptoms of sexual climax for young children, Kinsey claimed, often included "sobbing," "violent cries," "loss of color," and an "abundance of tears."

Kinsey and his apostles have made contradictory claims concerning the



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number of child-molesters employed to produce this data. It is quite possible that Kinsey—a longtime counselor for such groups as the Boy Scouts and the YMCA—was a prime "observer" and source of information. While it is important to know who Kinsey's trained observers were, Reisman also asks the more important question: "Where are the children today?"

To this day, Indiana University's Kinsey Institute remains clouded in secrecy. Concerning "interviews" with small girls, Reisman wonders, "If, as the Kinsey team claimed, a parent was always present during the interview between 'Uncle Kinsey' and 'Uncle Pomeroy' and the small girl, and if all of every subject is in secret code in the Institute data base, as they claimed, why are these children not traceable?"

Despite having his work thoroughly discredited, Kinsey is still the ground from which most modern sex education is rooted. Reisman notes that "almost all AIDS and sex education in elementary, secondary, college, graduate and post-graduate school base their sex education curricula on the Kinseyan 'variant' model." That a man who stamped his imprimatur on sex between adults and children would exert a prime influence on the sexual education of children does not speak well for America's schools.

Nearly two decades since her address exposing Kinsey's role in child abuse at the World Congress of Sexology in Jerusalem, Reisman continues to serve as an agent of truth. While much attention has been given to James Jones's new Kinsey biography, Reisman's *Kinsey: Crimes & Consequences* demonstrates that Jones, a former Kinsey Institute employee, conceals more than he reveals.

From Thomas Jefferson to J. Edgar Hoover, the sex lives (both real and imagined) of prominent Americans have become an obsession of modern academics. Yet Kinsey, the very man who would merit such an investigation most, has been ignored. Academics, feeling an ideological kinship with Kinsey, have therefore balked at debunking him.

A half-century after issuing his first sex study, Alfred Kinsey and his work have been uncovered as a fraud. Will it take another 50 years for educators to begin to take notice?

*Daniel J. Flynn is the executive director of Accuracy in Academia.*

# Dixie Redux

***by Loxley F. Nichols***

**Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches From the Unfinished Civil War**
*by Tony Horwitz*
*New York: Pantheon Books; 406 pages, $27.50*

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In Maryland, one naturally associates historical reenactment with the Civil War. Yet the only reenactor I know eschews the Civil for the Revolutionary War because, he says, "I don't reenact events where the people are still fighting the war. They might use live ammunition!" Tony Horwitz's account of the South's continuing preoccupation with the War Between the States suggests that this concern is not completely unwarranted. Hard-core Civil War reenactors will go to extravagant lengths for authenticity, from soaking brass buttons in urine to produce just the right patina to crash dieting in order to achieve the gaunt look of the veteran soldier to sleeping on cold wet ground with nothing more than a tissue-thin blanket and "spooning" for warmth; a few do actually consider, wistfully, what it would be like to "go the whole way."

The champion of total reenactment has to be Robert Lee Hodge of the Southern Guard, who possesses the singular ability to "bloat" like a days-old corpse. Introduced in the first pages of *Confederates in the Attic*, Hodge provides a connecting thread throughout Horwitz's perambulation of the Southern war territory, while his adventures with the author make for some of the best moments in the book. These include reenactments large and small as well as a "Civil Wargasm" (an intense, week-long pilgrimage to Civil War memorials). Adhering to wartime exigencies of dress and sleeping on site, the two men steep themselves in period lore, reading aloud from war diaries and letters throughout the day and again each night by candlelight.

Snippets from diaries, letters, and histories, as well as interesting tidbits, are woven throughout the book and provide poignant expressions of, and commentary on, the war as it was actually fought, while helping to explain the passion that reenactment can elicit. In a Marylander's Civil War journal describing passing Confederates as "a ragged, lean and hungry set of wolves" who nevertheless had "a dash about them that the Northern men lacked . . . [t]hey rode like circus riders," Horwitz discovers the image that enthusiasts seek to replicate: "threadbare, famished, lice-and-dysentery-ridden, and for all that romantic."

From the fact that most Civil War reenactors prefer grey over blue, Horwitz concludes the motivating impulse to be largely sartorial, having more to do with image than ideology. Yet by signing up with the Confederacy, these men seem to be choosing *ideals* (which are clear and straightforward) in preference to *ideas* (which are often murky and circuitous). The South's chivalric ideals, combined with the purifying element of physical suffering, obviously provide an irresistible alternative to the virtual reality of modern-day life, Southern or otherwise.

Mr. Horwitz shows that much of the vitality of the South lies in its unyielding resistance to defeat. Amid the blight of franchise restaurants and shopping centers, rootlessness, and homogenization, the war continues to offer dignity and grandeur. As Mr. Horwitz discovers early on in his journey, enthusiastic bastions of Southerners descended from the generation that fought the War Between the States remain firmly entrenched in Southern landscape and culture. Taking a break from the monotony of interstate driving, Horwitz happens upon Salisbury, North Carolina, a hotbed of Civil War remembrance and ancestral pride. In Salisbury, Horwitz meets Ed and Sue Curtis, who introduce him to the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the Sons of Confederate Veterans, and the Children of the Confederacy. For the Curtises, the War represents family, "knowing who's once removed and six times down." Members of these organizations are, it seems, a mixed group. In the SCV alone, Horwitz finds a doctor, pastor, rose grower, gun-shop owner, state employee, several farmers, and a textile worker. The last of these, living with his second wife in a cramped, book-lined trailer surrounded by tract houses and strip malls, often slips out of bed in the middle of the night to read Civil War history by oven light. "It's an escape," Mike Hawkins explains. "When I'm reading, I feel like I'm there, not here. And when



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I finish I feel content, like I've been away for a while." For him, the SCV is important because it "brings people together, like the War did. I sit in a room with a doctor and pastor and such. . . . We're all together for the same reason."

Just south of Atlanta in Clayton County, by contrast, the Old South means money. This, the fictional territory of Margaret Mitchell's 1930's best-seller, is a mecca for Japanese tourists who come in droves seeking "Gone With the Window." Here, amidst Tara Auto World, Tara Baptist Church, Tara Trophies, and so on, Horwitz finds entrepreneurs like Melly Meadows, a Scarlett O'Hara impersonator, and Betty Talmadge. Mrs. Talmadge, former wife of U.S. Senator Herman Talmadge and self-proclaimed owner of *both* GWTW plantations, is catering dinners for businessmen at "Twelve Oaks" until she can figure out how to create a theme park from her collection. (Her meals feature Scarlett carrots, Rhett Butler biscuits, and abra-Ham Lincoln.)

A fictive "Old South" may be good business, but the actual historical event of war still engenders powerful, even violent, controversy. In this context Horwitz discusses at length the status of Commander Wirz of Andersonville, the placement of Arthur Ashe's statue in Richmond, and the Rebel Flag-related shooting death of Michael Westerman in Guthrie, Kentucky. More disturbing is Horwitz's discovery that Civil War history has been completely expunged from the public school curriculum in Alabama—one way to avoid disagreement over the heritage of the Old South being to remove the issue altogether from contemplation. While Horwitz wonders whether "ignorance might prove a blessing," in every classroom he visits he finds the black children sitting on one side of the room and the white ones on the other.

In spite of the singularity of Tony Horwitz's approach and the richness of his reporting, *Confederates in the Attic* is seriously flawed by its author's inability to get beyond the issue of slavery as *the* cause of the war. Thus, while often surprised by what he finds, Horwitz's essential understanding of the big picture remains stubbornly unchanged from his original preconception of it. Mr. Horwitz has an obvious affection for the South, and he does attempt to be fair. His effort at objectivity, however, is compromised by a troubling problem with tone. In his descriptions, particularly where his choice of detail is concerned, Horwitz now and again conveys a subtle condescension toward his subject, quietly betraying individuals who have opened their doors to this outsider by making them look mildly ridiculous. As unreliable as Selma's Mayor Smitherman may be, his parting words to Horwitz are prophetic: "Y'all always do the same, come in here smiling and then go home and write a dig at us."

Perhaps Mr. Horwitz, not being a Southerner himself, simply doesn't know any better, his sense of etiquette being only slightly more developed than his understanding of Southern regional politics. It was Tony Horwitz, after all, who (in the *Wall Street Journal*) described Michael Hill, president of the League of the South, as wearing a tie instead of a hood, and charged that "much of what passes for 'antigovernment' or 'states rights' sentiment is actually racism, xenophobia, and anti-Semitism, wrapped up now in fashionable anti-Washington rhetoric."

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# REGARDING IMMIGRATION...

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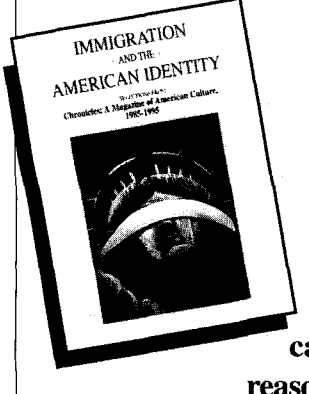


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*by Samuel Francis*

## After the Cold War

*(This column was originally delivered as the keynote speech at a* Chronicles' *conference,* "Overcoming the Schism: European Divisions and U.S. Policy," *held in Chicago on May 8.)*

You would never guess that the Cold War is over. Almost all commentators on foreign policy start off their speeches or articles by performing an obligatory knee bend to the "end of the Cold War" and then continue to talk about our foreign policy as though the Cold War were still going on. They still chatter about "America's global responsibilities"; they still worry about the scale of U.S. military defenses; they still dither and dabble in world affairs, perhaps even more recklessly than in the 1950's and 60's.

We still dole out immense sums of money in foreign aid to various client states; we still maintain the Cold War alliances with Asian and Latin American states that were set up as a global defense system, and in NATO we have even expanded the alliance to undertake an undefined "new mission." Occasionally, we stop to realize that our major adversary in the Cold War no longer exists, but we have not even begun to think about, let alone act upon, the vast implications of the Soviet collapse. Most of all, we still conduct our foreign policy on the unquestioned assumption that the United States faces a serious threat to its vital interests and national security, even though no one seems to be able to tell us what that threat is. Indeed, American foreign policy in the post-Cold War period could perhaps be defined as a "search for a new enemy," since only the existence of an enemy could justify the continuation of the basic framework of Cold War foreign policy.

In fact, the end of the Cold War represents a new era in American foreign policy of the kind that we have not seen since 1914. After that year, our foreign policy was exclusively defined by the need to defend the United States against a real or perceived enemy—the Kaiser, the Axis, or the Kremlin. As a result, most of us have simply lost the capacity to think about foreign policy in the absence of an enemy, and, to paraphrase what Voltaire said of God, if an enemy does not exist, it would be necessary to invent one. Moreover, foreign policy professionals possess a powerful vested interest in identifying an enemy and telling us how we ought to defeat or contain him. If they do not get paid for doing that, then they have no other function, and many of my colleagues in Cold War, Inc., have had to undertake some fancy footwork to adjust their professional lives to a Cold War-less world.

There have been several candidates for the new enemy—Saddam Hussein, Somalia's late warlord Mohammed Farah Aidid, and more recently various Balkan or Arab leaders who have popped up on the screen much like the cut-outs of 1930's gangsters that the FBI still uses for target practice at its training academy. Clearly, the basic personality of the enemy is always Hitler, and he always exhibits the same demonic cruelty, the same maniacal aggressiveness, and the same psychotic ambitions as *Der Führer.*

But sometimes today the enemy is cast not as a personality but as a force—Islamic fundamentalism or transnational crime, which is usually lumped together with international terrorism, and all of which are then identified with domestic white separatists and militia groups. Islamic fundamentalism seemed for a while to be a very credible enemy, especially after the World Trade Center bombing in 1993, but it soon faded after the Oklahoma City bombing. Transnational organized crime is perhaps a more plausible enemy, although it too lacks a conveniently defined face. Drug smuggling, arms smuggling, and people who smoke cigarettes on international air flights seem to compete for the role of the foe against whom our military, political, economic, and intelligence resources must be mobilized. A few years ago, Massachusetts Senator John Kerry explicitly identified transnational crime as the new enemy. "The overall international organized crime threat to our interests is more serious than we had assumed," Senator Kerry trembled. "Organized crime is the new communism, the new monolithic threat." All that is lacking is a large photograph of the insidious Dr. Fu Manchu.

Libertarians who refused to see an enemy in the Soviet Union argued that an enemy was invented for the purpose of justifying the vast enlargement of the federal state in the wake of World War II and for the perpetuation of the state machinery established during the earlier conflict. But even if their premise, that the Soviets were really not an enemy, is wrong, their conclusion contains a great deal of truth. The recognition by the American foreign policy establishment in the 1940's that the Soviets were a threat (as belated as it was and as blinded as the establishment had been by its reliance on the counsel of outright traitors like Alger Hiss, Harry Dexter White, and Lauchlin Curry) was followed by a resolution to fight communism in the same way as New Deal liberals had tried to fight domestic social problems. In announcing the Truman Doctrine in 1947, Truman claimed that "The seeds of totalitarian regimes are nurtured by misery and want. They spread and grow in the evil soil of poverty and strife. They reach their full growth when the hope of a people for a better life has died," and in 1965 Lyndon Johnson boasted of his plans to construct what he called "the TVA on the Mekong," presumably to liberate the Vietnamese peasants from communism in the same way that the TVA was supposed to liberate Tennessee peasants from bootlegging and snake-charming. The strategy by which Cold War liberals sought to fight communism, then, was simply an extension of their strategy for domestic social reform, and it promised much the same rewards for the bureaucratic and managerial elites that were to supervise it.

The insight of James Burnham, in his trilogy on communism in the 1940's, that communism simply used "bad social conditions" to advance its own power was missed by those establishment leaders who were otherwise influenced by Burnham. They exploited his premise that the Soviets were engaged in a "struggle for the world" to construct and perpetuate a foreign policy apparatus that was committed to preserving and enhancing its own bureaucratic leverage and to making certain that the struggle for the world would last forever, or at least until they started receiving their



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own pensions from the federal government. In the 1990's, conservatives crow about our "victory in the Cold War," but virtually nothing we did during the Cold War deserves the name of victory. We armed our enemies with trade deals and grain deals even as we sent American troops to fight against the war machine that American capitalism helped build. We betrayed ally after ally to communism or its surrogates—in Eastern Europe, China, Cuba, Africa, and Southeast Asia; we refused to extirpate the spies and traitors who infested the federal government and damned the characters of patriots and heroes like Whittaker Chambers and Louis Budenz who risked their careers and even their lives to expose the treason, and politicians in both parties used "Great Power Diplomacy" and arms treaties that could not be verified to advance their own careers.

There was a real enemy in the Soviet Union and the communism it espoused, but we never did much to win victory over it, and even in the Reagan era, I can tell you, as one who worked on foreign policy issues in the U.S. Senate, neither I nor any of my colleagues believed that "we" were winning the Cold War or defeating communism. Having won a victory we did not deserve, we now devote ourselves to continuing to fight the war we regret is over. In the past, I have described our recent policies of foreign interventionism as a form of imperialism. It is that, but it is also something different, namely globalism.

Under imperialism, one nation or political unit conquers other political units; while under globalism, there is a transcendence of the political unit itself. We see this today in the deliberate attack upon national sovereignty, in NAFTA, the WTO, and the European Union; and in the efforts at moving the United Nations toward a world government, replicating virtually every function of national government—proposals have been made for a standing U.N. army, for a new international currency, for direct U.N. taxation, and for a permanent U.N. criminal court to try "human rights" violations; and various U.N. covenants seek to regulate domestic subnational laws and policies on issues such as the treatment of women and children, regulation of the environment, civil and political rights, the death penalty, and, most recently, global gun control.

The driving force behind globalism is not the ruling class of any distinct nation but rather a new ruling class that is transnational in its scope and interests, an elite that has effectively disengaged itself from the underlying institutions and cultures that define nationality, so that today a corporate executive in New York has more in common with his counterpart in Tokyo or Kiev than he does with his co-national in Kansas or Wisconsin. Pat Buchanan's new book, *The Great Betrayal*, offers quotation after quotation from American corporate leaders who disavow the interests of their own country and explicitly identify themselves and their companies as non-American. We see the results of this disengagement in the recent controversy over importing foreign skilled workers. There are hundreds and perhaps thousands of Americans who are perfectly well qualified to work as computer engineers but who cannot get jobs in the computer industry because the companies, run by deracinated and avaricious geeks, insist on hiring Third World workers at lower salaries.

And of course we see the results of globalism in uncontrolled immigration, which occurs not just because agribusiness demands cheap labor: so does the meat packing industry in the Midwest; so does the poultry industry in the South; and so does almost every other organized institution in American life—labor unions, eager to refill their depleted ranks with foreign workers; churches, desperate to attract new congregations after their ministers have driven away their old ones with their bloodless sermons and their theology without thunder; and, most of all, the vast complex of government, education, social work, and therapy that perpetually seeks a new underclass on which to work its voodoo.

Of course, globalism makes use of imperialism and of the underlying nations that it seeks to erode and transcend, just as a nest of termites makes use of a house. The corporations that boast of being transnational rather than American could not exist without the American economy, American workers, American consumers, and the American culture and legal system that created them in the first place. The United Nations and similar transnational organizations could not exist without the funds supplied by American taxpayers. The Glorious Multicultural America that twinkles in the mind's eye of the advocates of open borders and the abolition of national boundaries could not exist without the old, monocultural America, based on its British and European inheritances and populations. Globalism, just as much as the "struggle for the world" against communism, is an illusion, and it can become a reality only when it has destroyed the reality of nation, race, and culture on which it rests.

But if globalism cannot easily become a reality, that does not mean that it cannot triumph by the very destruction of the house on which it feeds. The New World Order is more than just a new configuration of the post-Cold War world. It involves a domestic transformation just as much as it does an international one, and while its international agenda may stumble and falter on the intractable rocks of an American population that distrusts the United Nations and the promises of perpetual peace won through perpetual war, its domestic agenda proceeds apace. The transformation of American civilization through immigration, the permeation of our schools and universities by multiculturalism, and the ever advancing power of the federal government over its citizens is integral to building the globalist illusion, and it is a transformation that both political parties, the Stupid Party and the Evil Party, and more broadly, both the right and the left, have advanced.

The real conflict today is not between right and left, capitalist and socialist, and certainly not between nation and nation, but between nationalist and globalist. There are of course many forms and faces of that conflict, because the globalist agenda contains so many different facets, but it is no less a struggle for the world than the earlier struggle against communism was. In this new struggle, we cannot depend on our ruling elites in government or the economy or the culture to fight for us, any more than we could depend on their fighting communism; indeed, we can depend on them fighting against us, but we will have to fight it ourselves. If it's a new enemy we're looking for, we don't have to go very far, and certainly not to the Balkans or Baghdad. The enemy is here, and it is no less an enemy—of freedom, of nationality, of our whole way of life—than the communists ever were. Once Americans awaken to the reality of its existence and the threat it represents, as many Europeans are awakening now, we should be able to defeat it far more effectively than we ever defeated our earlier foe.



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# Letter From New York

*by Robert Berman*

## The Asphalt League

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In his 1942 swan song, *The New Leviathan*, dying British philosopher-historian R.G. Collingwood called the life of the mind "a magic journey." Remarkably free of illusions regarding the life of the university, however, Collingwood argued for "domesticating" professors, rather than being subject to them. But things have only gotten worse since then. Whether "public" or "private," today's university might more aptly be termed an "antiversity," where reason, science, evidence, and debate are held in Thrasymachean contempt, while repression, privilege, pseudo-science, and violence are lionized. Public and private campuses alike are dominated by massive government subsidy and coercion. This is particularly true in New York.

Take, for example, the City University of New York (CUNY). With the departure last September of CUNY's embattled chancellor, W. Ann Reynolds, some observers thought this once great institution, with an enrollment of 210,000 students, might yet be reformed from within. The 20,000 full-time employees who live large at the taxpayers' expense in CUNY's $4.4 billion-a-year patronage mill have had a generation to consolidate the culture of failure established in 1970 with the policy of "open admissions." A bread-and-circuses response to fears of black race riots, open admissions guaranteed acceptance at CUNY to every graduate of New York City's public schools.

CUNY's Asphalt League of urban higher education will be reformed from without, or not at all. Among the obstacles to internal reform are "bilingual" (read: English-free) Hostos Community College. Over 65 percent of CUNY's students at four-year colleges, and 87 percent of its community college students, fail tenth and 11th-grade-level examinations and require remediation in reading, writing, and/or math. The community college graduation rate is 1.3 percent after two years, and the senior college rate under nine percent after four years. Thousands of "college-level" courses require no English fluency, while hundreds of classes are given entirely in Spanish. Activist professors seek to abolish all grading and all testing in English. CUNY alumni have the lowest passing rates on law boards and teacher certification exams (yet comprise over 80 percent of the city's public school teachers, and continue teaching despite failing the exam) in the state of New York. Student and staff goons routinely intimidate faculty, students, and administrators. The adjunct "gypsies" who comprise 75 percent of CUNY's faculty are exploited and abused. Administrators and professors assume the racial inferiority of the black and Hispanic students who make up 80 percent of CUNY's student body. Finally, CUNY leaders vehemently oppose students on welfare performing even 20 hours a week of workfare activity. All of these problems derive from open admissions and its underlying welfare mentality.

Confronted in 1993 with a tearful, angry white woman who had just flunked a remedial reading final for the second consecutive semester, I realized why such courses are a waste of time and taxpayers' money. Aside from their childish level, they assume that reading is some sort of specialized skill, like welding, as opposed to a way of life. Meanwhile, reading courses are geared towards "students" who are indifferent or hostile to the written word. The most prolific reading textbook writer, John Langan, and the department heads who assign Langan's books, refuse to admit that you cannot teach welding to people who are anti-welding. CUNY's defenders insist that people who despise the intellect have a "right" to a higher education.

Any slender hopes I still held out for internal reform were dashed upon encountering neoconservative "reformers" within CUNY's ranks. Just as multiculturalists think that quoting Brazilian pedagogue Paulo Freire makes them revolutionaries, neoconservatives think that dropping Allan Bloom's name will make them classicists. At an almost empty meeting of the predominantly neoconservative National Association of Scholars, a request by CUNY Vice-Chancellor Herman Badillo (a City College of New York alumnus) that reform-minded instructors research their schools' practices inspired only a complaint from a tenured Brooklyn College professor that the demands of teaching four courses per semester and sitting on the odd committee were giving full-timers "heart conditions." These slackers have lifetime jobs, paying $60,000 to $110,000 per year, plus ample benefit and pension packages, for perhaps a 40-hour week—with five months' vacation time!

The professor responded to Badillo, "We have to work here," explaining that some students might not appreciate being criticized by their instructors. CUNY's full-time professoriate is composed of genteel OPU (overpriced private university) educated "aristocrats" of all colors who look upon their students alternately with terror and condescending fascination. Full-timers pander shamelessly to—and pass—student bullies, sometimes sicking them on colleagues. Yet seeing their students as genetically inferior punks is essential to maintaining full-timers' fragile self-esteem.

CUNY adjuncts are paid an average of $2,300 per course on a piecework basis (still twice as much as many New York-based adjuncts make at New Jersey schools), receive no benefits, and must hustle every semester anew for work. (CUNY once commonly hired its own alumni as full-time faculty, but now almost never does.) Ruthless department heads routinely make empty promises of work to some adjuncts, while other adjuncts quit just as a new semester begins, or walk out on ongoing classes. Recently, a full-timer at Bronx Community College quit two weeks before midterms. At the replacement teacher's first class, a late-arriving, 240-pound black man who refused to identify himself lectured the white professor, "You got an attitude!" The following morning, a student sobbed to the department's secretary that she had flunked the same course, a graduation requirement, under two separate professors the previous semester. Certain that the new man would turn tail and run (he didn't), she feared she would never graduate. The professor's black female department head then sought to humiliate him in front of his students.



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Meanwhile—surprise, surprise—security guards and custodians reported recurring violent incidents in that department's classes.

Thanks to the nationwide policy of "mismatching," chronicled by Thomas Sowell in *Inside American Education*, CUNY is at the bottom of a pyramid of black failure. For over 30 years, admissions officials have systematically "mismatched" black applicants, admitting them to schools for which they were unqualified, and thus setting them up for failure. As a result, black graduation rates remain at 29 percent nationally, half the white rate. Even mediocre American-born black students avoid CUNY like the plague. They know that more prestigious schools are sure to admit them and generously subsidize them as well. Their presence, however brief, boosts "elite" school minority enrollment figures and thus officials' self-esteem, while contributing to black student bitterness and a privately acknowledged belief in black inferiority among white students, instructors, and administrators.

Prior to 1970, City College of New York (CCNY), the Harlem-based "jewel in CUNY's crown," had tougher standards than Harvard College and produced more Nobel laureates than any other American undergraduate institution. Early in this century, desperately poor Jewish boys pursued profane learning with a religious fervor at CCNY. At the same time, as James Traub reported in *City on a Hill: Testing the American Dream at City College*, CCNY's neurotic, argumentative Jews utterly lacked the social skills so prized by the Ivy League. They combined intellectual brilliance with a working-class toughness since buried under layers of arriviste (think: Woody Allen) and multicultural revisionism. In *A History of the Jews in America*, Howard M. Sachar recalled that the same slums that spawned CCNY's first Jews also produced many of the era's dominant boxers (e.g., Al McCoy, Abe "Battling" Levinsky, Benny Leonard) and most vicious gangsters ("Dutch" Schultz, Louis "Lepke" Buchalter, Abe "Kid Twist" Reles).

Initially, two merit-blind patronage systems blocked the path of Eastern European Jews: the Ivy League/Seven Sisters world run by WASP "bluebloods" and New York's shanty Irish Catholic system, run through Tammany Hall's Democratic machine. As Chris McNickle chronicled in *To Be Mayor of New York*, in making hiring and promotions for city jobs incumbent upon passing objective tests, the 1916 Civil Service Law broke the Irish monopoly. CCNY was the path to those merit-tested jobs. Meanwhile, the anti-Semitic admissions and hiring quotas instituted during the 1920's at the nation's predominantly Protestant private colleges ensured that over 90 percent of CCNY's male students and Hunter College's female students were Jews, and caused New York to have the nation's best-educated corps of public school teachers.

As Roger Starr observed in *The Rise and Fall of New York City*, a series of activist mayors, most notably Robert Wagner, Jr. (1954-1966), squandered the post-war economic boom on massive social programs and then mollified the middle class by creating entitlements and administrative jobs to inflate its already rising standard of living. New York's Irish and Jews profited most from those emoluments. Moving to the suburbs, they sent their children to overpriced private universities: the Irish kids to Catholic schools, and the Jews to the Ivy League, which had dropped its anti-Semitic quotas. During the fiscal crisis of 1974-75, the state put the city in the receivership of the Municipal Assistance Corporation, and CUNY began charging tuition.

Prior to World War II, there was no CUNY system. After the war, returning soldiers received hard-earned educational benefits under the G.I. Bill. But the typical veteran was no rocket scientist. New colleges accommodated him. Riding the national wave of public-college boondoggles, and buoyed by the cult of professionalism, the civil rights movement, and the technocratic "multiversity" movement (led by sociologist and UC-Berkeley President Clark Kerr), the city instituted John Jay (1967) and Lehman (1968) colleges, and the black colleges, York (1966) and Medgar Evers (1969). (Like the Social Gospel's secular church, the civil rights/New Left vision foresaw the university as serving a myriad of non-cognitive functions, and ultimately revolutionizing, liberating, and saving society.) Medgar Evers proved so horrendous that it managed to lose its four-year accreditation and now is a two-year school, much to the chagrin of its conspiracy-obsessed, Afrocentric keepers. The same period also saw a boom in community colleges: Bronx (1957), Queensborough (1958), Kingsborough (1963), Borough of Manhattan (1964), Hostos (1968), LaGuardia (1971), and Staten Island (1976, but since expanded to include both two and four-year components). As a matter of economic survival, community colleges introduced the practice of "open admissions." Each new second-rate school further eroded the dominance of CCNY and Hunter College. The burgeoning empire was consolidated in 1961 as the centrally administered "City University of New York."

As James Traub has noted, white labor union leader Harry Van Arsdale was perhaps the crucial ally of open admissions in the 1960's. Initially, the children of Van Arsdale's Catholic rank-and-file flooded into CCNY during the 1970's, and later filled city agency and teaching jobs.

With over 50 percent of U.S. residents now attending college, Jews are disproportionately represented in the snobby student bodies and faculties of schools such as New York University, Columbia, and Princeton. If nothing else, today's WASP-imitating, OPU Jews possess the "social skills" their forebears lacked.

Some 30 percent of OPU student rolls are composed of second-raters for whom admissions standards were waived: alumni and faculty brats, affirmative action cases, and athletes. Cheating is big business, and has been refined to a science. As a result of the growing irrelevance of intellect in academia, I often encounter OPU-trained, tenured instructors of German literature who can't speak German, and "specialists" in German philosophy who can't read the language.

In 1994, over 80 percent of Princeton's graduating class received honors. Last October, CUNY Vice-Chancellor Herman Badillo's reaction to the revelation that 50 percent of Brooklyn College's graduating class had received honors was, "They can't all be geniuses!" Like CUNY's OPU-trained full-timers, Badillo had no such qualms about Princeton.

In 1996, I trained as a "rater" on the CUNY Academic Certification Examination (ACE), a future graduation requirement. In the ACE's quantitative section, pie charts showed that fat content in the American diet had risen from an average of 12 percent in 1910 to an average of 42 percent by 1960. Many students responded that the percentage of fat had risen "30 percent." The half-dozen OPU-trained faculty I queried all



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thought the preceding answer was correct.

There is a difference between the leveling socialism of a Bill Clinton, whose plan to guarantee that every American spends at least two years confined to an institution of higher education presupposes the open admissions model, and the pre-open admissions CCNY, whose socialism was limited to being tuition-free. CCNY's socialism was ameliorated by a radical meritocracy that severely limited access, provided no financial aid, had no remedial and disability-ed specialists, and no affirmative action, student social services, and feminist and racial spoils bureaucracies. CUNY's four-year colleges now charge $3,200 tuition per year, yet thousands of their students net up to $5,000 in financial aid, under criteria that penalize work.

In the 1970's, the civil rights vision that rationalized "open admissions" was joined with the New Left's "race model" in the powerful hybrid of affirmative action. In making higher education universally "accessible" and its function all-embracing, these movements robbed it of cognitive content, undermining its foundational beliefs in objective knowledge and morality. The rise of the analytic delusion of philosophy as a neutral "science" and the concomitant eviction of biblical and New Testament-based philosophies from mainstream academia left philosophers impotent against two assaults. First came the New Left's reduction of all knowledge to the power to oppress, followed by postmodernism's nihilistic "irony" (which, while also worshipping power, explicitly denied the possibility of objective knowledge or morality). The university was refounded on the bases of privilege, bread and circuses, and naked violence.

Responding to the campus takeover of CCNY in the spring of 1968 by students and "community activists," sociologist Daniel Bell, a CCNY alumnus, noted the ineffectiveness of collegiate remedialism and presciently predicted the ascendance of the university to the dominant institution in American life. Both states of affairs must be rolled back, and then some. For CUNY to return to something resembling a true university, all remedial, English-as-a-second-language, and ethnic and gay academic ghettoes must be demolished, non-academic "services" radically curtailed, tenure eliminated, the status of adjuncts improved, and enrollment reduced by 50 to 75 percent.

Socialist historian Russell Jacoby has complained, in *Dogmatic Wisdom*, of the increasing "vocationalism" of campuses dominated by business majors. The well-intentioned, articulate Jacoby notwithstanding, when "higher education" is not merely an OPU-graduate jobs program, it is a provider of economically inefficient job training. A love for the liberal arts won't be sparked through the "correct" sort of propaganda in mandatory multicultural or neoconservative core courses taught by OPU-trained ignoramuses, but rather through *diminishing* the role of institutionalized mass higher education, and its primary and secondary-school counterparts. To paraphrase philosopher Erwin Edmonds' 1940's musings, we have a better chance of inspiring a rebirth of interest in the humanities by banning their teaching outright than by enforcing it.

In exhorting parents to educate their children at home, as his father had educated him, R.G. Collingwood anticipated the homeschooling movement. Like the love of the liberal (i.e., free) life, the love of the liberal arts will never thrive at the public trough. Such love is nourished at one's mother's breast, or not at all.

*Robert Berman writes from New York City.*

# Letter From Inner Israel

***by Jacob Neusner***

## Old Testament, Yes; New Testament, No

◆

U.S. District Court Judge Elizabeth Kovachevich here in Tampa ruled in January that it is all right to teach the Old Testament but not the New Testament in public high schools. Concerned that the state not sponsor religion, Judge Kovachevich permits "the history of the Bible" but not "the Bible as history."

So far so good—the wall between church and state stands unscathed if we read the history of the Bible, whatever that is—but how does that permit her to distinguish one Testament from the other? Well, she finds it difficult to conceive how accounts of miracles and resurrection could be taught as history. So she strains at the gnat and swallows the camel, for how are we to teach the Old Testament without such miracles as God telling an old man to leave home and go elsewhere, where, at 100, he will produce a son, whom he then is to kill; God splitting the sea for his people, then sewing it back up over their enemies; walls falling to trumpet noise; the sun standing still, and on and on—not to mention, after all, creation in seven days? Why no to resurrection, but yes to creation?

If you wonder why the New Testament cannot be taught because it is full of miracles but the Old Testament can because it is not (even though it is), well, then, try this: the New Testament is perceived as Christianity's part of the Scriptures, while the Old Testament is not, so the former is unclean and forbidden, while the latter is *kosher*.

If the only issue is truth or falsehood, right or wrong, then the judge has asked the right question (even though her answer strikes me as odd, since I can't say what difference her distinction makes). But the study of religion sets forth another set of questions altogether, academic questions of description, analysis, and interpretation of humanity and its aspirations, viewed in the framework of this world and its culture. Then the question to ask about resurrection is not whether it is so, but what it has meant and continues to mean today in the religious world of Christianity—and this is a question with an objective, descriptive answer. This is what the academy does when it studies religion.

In fact, the judge's decision misses what is at stake in the study of religion in the public schools, which the Supreme Court (from the 1963 *Regents* case onward) has explicitly approved. The state may not sponsor pro- or anti-religious instruction. But the state may and ought to sponsor courses *about* religion, teaching about religion as a component of human civilization in much of the world, certainly in the West and in the United States. The Court paved the way for the religious studies departments that later appeared on campuses all over the country. As recently as two years ago, President Clinton went over this ground and delivered the same message: publicly sponsored study is all right, but religious



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practice is for the private sector.

The Court made clear that not only history courses (such as those approved by Judge Kovachevich) but academic religious studies courses are permitted. The Supreme Court explicitly allows the *religious* study of religion, not only the historical study of religion, and there is a difference. Each discipline frames matters in its own terms. A history department offers a course in the history of ancient Israel that may or may not intersect with the Hebrew Scriptures (the "Old Testament") or with the history of late antiquity, encompassing the beginning of Christianity. A religion department offers the religion of ancient Israel and an account of the authorized history that conveys the theology of that religion in narrative form from Genesis through Kings.

Along these same lines, a religion department portrays the formation of Christianity in the first seven centuries A.D. or the history of Judaism in that same period—without close attention to the affairs of the Roman or Iranian empires at that time, which would preoccupy a counterpart history course. So there are real differences between historical and religious studies of the same period and even the same writings.

What the judges, the state, the ACLU, and most people (who, like myself, do not want state sponsorship of religion or of atheism) oppose is the presentation of the Bible (or the Koran or the Talmud) in the framework of religious belief: state-sponsored advocacy of anybody's holy scripture as God's word. What many—including the Supreme Court, even President Clinton—do favor is state-fostered literacy in the principal documents of Western civilization, of which the Bible certainly is primary. Nothing in Judge Kovachevich's argument suggests an opposition to the academic (if sympathetic) presentation of religion and various religions as important components of human civilization.

Students in public schools should not be taught either to believe or not to believe. They should understand what religion is and what its role in culture and history has been and is today. Otherwise, they are not going to understand the world in which they live—down to the numerous buildings that bear religious symbols and provide the locus for praying and other religious activities, buildings that grace every other street corner in St. Petersburg and Tampa. Who are these people, what do they believe, where do they come from, why do they matter—these are the questions of the social study of religion that judges, the state, and most people deem critical to education.

But on that basis, the Old Testament and the New Testament are essential to the study of Western civilization. Without knowing what is in the Gospels, how are people to understand the art and music and architecture and politics and literature and poetry of the West throughout most of its history—or to make sense of Christianity, a principal part of Western civilization both then and now? Rather than grudgingly (and under strict ACLU supervision) admitting the Old Testament into the classroom, why not reconsider the entire matter?

Specifically, I propose (alongside courses on the religion of ancient Israel and on the history of Christianity in biblical times) high school courses on the religions that are practiced in the United States, with heavy emphasis upon Catholic and Protestant and Orthodox Christianity but appropriate attention also to Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, new religions of America (such as Mormonism and Scientology), and other religions represented in our country. Moreover, African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans have framed a distinctive, idiomatic Christianity, which deserves attention in its own terms, so that black and Hispanic young people will not be left out of the classroom.

A course on the world religions practiced in America would answer three questions: Where does this religion originate and what is its history? Where and how is it practiced in the United States? How has the encounter with America changed this religion? In a course such as this, the curriculum would not advocate belief or practice of religion but attention to religion as a fact of everyday life. Such a course could cultivate a sympathetic understanding of the actualities of religious life—and respect, too, for those who do not participate in religion.

A retired gentleman hereabouts attends all public conferences and fashions himself a vigilante for the ACLU. He wants to be sure that no illegal advocacy of religion takes place on public property or with public money. That is in line with the ACLU's demand, which Judge Kovachevich accepted, for videotapes of high school classes in "the history of the Bible/Old Testament." To date, the Inspector General charged with monitoring the compliance of the University of South Florida's Religious Studies Department has made no complaints of which I am aware, and I take it we have not given offense. But we also have not offended the vast constituency of evangelicals and Catholics, not to mention Muslims and practicing Jews.

So an academic approach to religion *is* possible and *can* work. Our department at the University of South Florida encompasses religious believers and non-believers, people who teach about a religion they practice and people who do not practice the religion they teach, and people who treat religion as a matter of theory alone. We all share the strong conviction that religion constitutes a powerful component of the public life of humanity and that it is something that ought to be studied and understood. And we all love our subject—believing humanity.

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# Letter From Rome

*by Andrei Navrozov*

## The Truth About Beauty

◆

Apart from talking about cooking while eating and about eating while not eating, Italians have a favorite subject, a kind of pet peeve, which they touch upon at least a dozen times a day in that same disarmingly artless voice in which the English exchange news of the weather. It is a fact that the English really do talk about the weather, for the simple reason that while the weather in Britain is not as bad as the natives would lead the foreigners to believe—in order to dissuade them from coming to Claridge's wearing Mickey Mouse ears, perhaps, or paying homage to the People's Princess in some other, less honestly felt but equally unsettling ways—it is extremely changeable,



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and hence a useful subject of conversation. No two Aprils are ever alike, nor two afternoons in any April, nor two hours in any April afternoon, and nobody in London ever saw the same kind of rain twice. It is always smaller, or flatter, or steeper, or softer, or whiter, or longer, or louder than another day's rain, sometimes falling over just half a street, sometimes out of a cloudless sky, sometimes with more than one rainbow over the horizon.

Anyway, for Italians the perennially newsworthy equivalent is overcrowding. As though guided by the instinct of a swarming bee that leads him to do exactly what everyone else in the city, the province, and the country is doing at that particular moment, an Italian will invariably find himself caught in some obscenely populous swarm, survey it with an air of genuine surprise, and address in its general direction, as if appealing to the errant conscience of each and every citizen worker, the ritual remark: *Troppa gente*! To chide them over this apparent incongruity is like berating bees for their excessive interest in nectar: if you happen to approve of honey, there is nothing excessive about it. Still, it is a little odd seeing a bee point at his fellows with what seems like genuine disapproval and exclaim that he could never imagine so many of them turning out for a sunny afternoon in sweet clover.

One Sunday morning in the spring I found myself inside a small dusty Fiat with four other adults and three children, motionless among similarly freighted cars in the traffic along the Via Aurelia, the ancient Roman road that turns north as it reaches the Tyrrhenian coast and makes its way towards Genoa and on to the Riviera. Tomorrow, a family friend had confided Saturday evening, is a good day to have lunch in Fregene, but let us leave early because otherwise there will be too many people. It was obvious that by the stroke of midnight on Saturday every friend of every other family in Rome had made the same confidential recommendation. On any other morning the seaside village of Fregene would be 20 minutes away. Like everyone else in Rome, we got there by lunchtime.

Whatever the news of the weather, Englishmen carry umbrellas. Artless as that *Troppa gente*! sounds to the foreigner, it now proved, as I had begun to suspect, so much knowing coquetry. On arrival in Fregene, where the occasional dilapidated villa glimpsed through a wrought-iron gate informs the visitor that the place has seen richer pickings as a fashionable summer resort, I saw an endless avenue of some 40 open-air restaurants, each the size of a football field, ready to receive all of Rome on the day all of Rome decides that today is the day for Fregene. The abandoned resort had adapted and become a year-round destination for Sunday outings, attracting enough people for people to start complaining. There was something of Brighton in the old British films about it, but without the penny-pinching sadness, and something of Atlantic City in those same good old days, except I was never there of course and can only guess what that was about.

There was an amazing blonde beauty at the next table in the restaurant we had chosen, a cross between Jayne Mansfield and the dish of spaghetti with *frutti di mare* that had just arrived. I say this in all seriousness, and not only because the shells on my plate reminded me of that famous painting in the Uffizi, but because the sun was burning overhead like magnesium wire and the wine taunted the brain by being judiciously cool, and because there was a breeze from the sea that smelled like wet gravel and dried flowers, and because the dish in question was the work of a great artist and the woman really did resemble the Venus of Botticelli. She was having lunch in the company of two brothers, young men with crewcuts who looked like U.S. Marines, their father, who looked like an ex-Marine, and the other sister-in-law, who was also auroral in form but only irresolutely 1950's in content, as though infected by some vague worldly sorrow while passing through a Ghirlandaio one morning on her way to the fishmonger's near the Galleria Colonna. There was also the young men's mother, fussing with a baby carriage where a newborn child belonging to one of the women cavorted like the infant Jesus.

Wherever one looked, a similarly tangled and absorbing family scene caught the eye, and, once caught, the eye had no choice but to take in the whole Sunday gospel of physical and spiritual wholesomeness, verse after orotund verse. I know I am beginning to sound like a voyeur with strong Nazi predilections, and under ordinary circumstances I might apologize for being charmed by bare arms and golden hair and even Wagner, but in this case I stand my ground. The sheer size of the spectacle before me endowed it with the stature of a natural phenomenon, and most would agree that it is unfair to accuse a geologist (even one obsessed by the health of the Alps) or an astronomer (even one with a romantic attachment to Alpha Centauri) of being a dirty old man and a fascist creep. There must have been eight or nine hundred people around us, which, multiplied by 40, amounted to something like 10,000 happy families crammed into a couple of square miles of blinding sunlight framed by the pale sand and the waveless sea. Gloriously, they seemed all alike, just like Tolstoy said.

Last month I wrote in this space about a brief visit to New York, and that afternoon in Fregene it occurred to me that during my stay there I had not seen a single beautiful woman. To make the observation more categorical, I would equate beauty with health and simply say that the women I saw in the streets of New York all looked like they were undergoing prolonged chemotherapy. The impression I now have (which admittedly pains the equivocal Russian in me, a Russian brought up on the harmony of Chekhov's kindness and the counterpoint of Dostoyevsky's individualism) is that beauty is not merely objective, but collectivist and conformist: more like a doctor's clean bill of health or Italian

## LIBERAL ARTS

### MELTING POT MALAISE

"The France [soccer] team is made up of such a 'melting pot' of players from Africa, Algeria and other such French populations that 'people find it difficult to embrace them.'"

—*French fan André Pascaud to Mark Cannizzaro of the* New York Post *(July 11, 1998)*



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country cooking or a Mussolini rally than a clever remark or French *nouvelle cuisine* or a volume of Nietzsche. Why else would all happy families look alike? Why else would anybody come to Fregene?

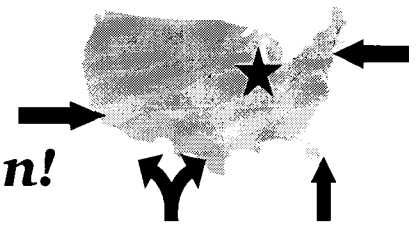
The lumping of truth with beauty is a characteristically northern, cold-blooded platitude. In reality they could not be farther apart, those two, like Moscow and St. Petersburg in the last century: one intimate, cloistered, spontaneous, untidy, the other public, designed, perfumed, splendid. A writer who says to himself, "I think this and find it to be true because everyone else does" is a fool and an insult to philosophy, but a lover who thinks "I like her and find her beautiful because others do" is part of the natural order of things and will probably make a good husband. This is because truth lives in cobwebs and musty corners, in interstices and even underground, coming out of a maze of cobbled streets to speak with the tongues of sometime carpenters and country doctors. Beauty is handsomely greying senators and opulently uniformed policemen; it is church bells and brass bands disturbing the non-conformist's sleep; it is spectacularly laid-out thoroughfares, parade grounds, and public gardens; in short, it is everything that all the imperial capitals of the world have always done so well. Truth is so original that it resists publication and courts only martyrdom, remaining intensely personal even when of necessity it must become universal. Beauty is an endlessly fascinating exhibition of itself, depersonalized and objective like a set of X-rays marked "Venus," inviting all who would succumb to its open-air, sunlit, and crowded, impossibly crowded vernissage.

A Russian writer I know used to say of Botticelli's allegorical representation of the pagan goddess of love that she looked like a Soviet factory worker, and I would hate to hear what he thought of Jayne Mansfield. I recently watched on Italian TV a clip of Mussolini addressing a beautifully laid-out and splendidly decorated town square, in Turin if I'm not mistaken, on the war in Spain: "Our enemies vow, *No passeran*! But I tell you, we have passed and are passing!" And then the camera panned the crowd of thousands upon thousands, and I saw the same scene I witnessed in Fregene, and every woman factory worker was no more sad or sickly than a Hollywood star of the 1950's, and every man was as fit and alert as a U.S. Marine. And I am sure that each and every one of them said, as they were getting dressed to arrive in the square no earlier and no later than anyone else in town, that the trouble with these fascist rallies is that there are too many people.

*Troppa gente*!

*Andrei Navrozov, formerly* Chronicles' *poetry editor and London correspondent, is now* Chronicles' *European correspondent.*


## *Only You Can Halt the Silent Invasion!*



America is now experiencing the greatest wave of immigration in its history. Three Presidential Commissions have warned that unless the trend is slowed it will have the gravest consequences for the future of America. Their warnings have been ignored. Why?

Why do the multinational corporations want America to tear down its borders?

How can a country of 270 million people have a "labor shortage"?

Why is America importing millions of the world's poor when we already have 36 million Americans in poverty?

How has excessive immigration depressed wage rates and job opportunities for America's poor?

What is the impact of today's unprecedented immigration levels on education, crime and taxes?

The ***Midwest Coalition to Reform Immigration (MCRI)*** has the answers and a strategic plan to save America's future. But we must act fast and we can't win without your help. ***Just 30 minutes a month of your time can reverse the trend that threatens the future of all Americans***

Call ***MCRI*** at ***1-800-709-0711*** for a free copy of our newsletter or contact us by e-mail at ***mcri2000@aol.com***

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EDUCATION

# Globaloney in the Classroom

*by Marian Kester Coombs*

The longer one observes American public schools today, the more comprehensive and deep-rooted the globalist infection appears. The erstwhile revolutionary-leftist underground has become the establishment, in public education and every other institution.

Educators now call themselves "change agents," in Timothy Leary's radical parlance. No lie is too big ("Diversity = Excellence") and no trick too low to be deployed in the radicals' mission to deform the public school curriculum. A true-life example of the trick tactic: A guidance counselor pre-empts a fifth-grade social studies class to deliver the pro-diversity unit *du jour*. She shows the class two cardboard boxes, a dingy white one labeled "1" and a box swathed in shiny, colorful plastic, labeled "2." Cooing that "there's no right or wrong answer, it's just what you feel, any answer is okay," the change agent passes out sheets on which the students are to write their names, their preferred box number, and one reason why they chose it.

A majority of students choose box number two, because it is more appealing to the eye. Ah, but dingy box number one contains a stash of stickers! "Well," smirks the agent, "I guess those who picked number one each get a sticker, and all you who picked number two just get left out. Too bad." (An observer mutters, "So there was a 'right' answer," and the shameless agent chuckles, "Yeah, how 'bout that.")

While parents have been distracted trying to earn enough money to stagger under their ballooning tax burden without stumbling out of the middle class, or lulled by soothing smooth talk to the effect that "We're the experts, you aren't qualified to teach a dog to beg, just leave it all to us," virtually every lesson that our children are being taught—from "C-A-T spells cat" to "2 + 2 is 4"—is pure propaganda. At the same time, our children are being programmed to take their assigned places in Oneworld's merged global labor force.

The National Center on Education and the Economy, directed by Marc Tucker, is promoting legislation called School-to-Work that explicitly recommends matching education to future labor-force requirements, whatever these are deemed to be. School-to-Work is part of the mutated "Goals 2000" package that President Clinton has been pushing on behalf of the elite and its National Education Association allies since taking office. The most recent headlines the effort has generated appear under the rubric of "national testing," but there are several other aspects to it as well, all proceeding quietly with fiat funding under the very noses of the public and our remaining champions in the legislative branch.

National testing is designed to create a psychological profile of each student. Questions on national tests delve into attitudes and feelings, and a high proportion of the answers are hand-scored, which injects still more of the elite's subjective bias into the tests. Files produced by such testing will be made available to potential employers and government agencies, ensuring that incorrect attitudes and inappropriate aptitudes can receive "intervention."

In the Dresden, Ohio, school district, where School-to-Work has already been adopted, high school seniors can study basket-weaving for credit. According to the Foundation Endowment's newsletter, *Academics First*, "Of the 195 student seniors who participated . . . between 1989 and 1995, 129 later applied for employment at [local basket company] Longaberger. Today, 74 percent are still employed at the basket factory."

One of the consultants to Goals 2000 is Ira Magaziner of healthcare-reform fame, who told the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development that, as Oneworld grinds the *pluribus* into *unum*, "Millions of jobs will be lost, but millions more will be created. Training and education will be needed for the transition." And Messrs. Tucker and Magaziner seem to know what those brand-new jobs will be.

More wives and mothers are in the labor force than ever before, yet median family income—not even allowing for inflation—is $1,000 less than it was ten years ago. Full employment now means that every adult must work in order for the household to remain solvent. Solvency, of course, is relative: families routinely carry $10,000 in debt and are considered solvent if they have not yet filed for bankruptcy. This consumer debt has risen in symmetrical proportion to tax increases over the past two decades, as people unconsciously spend the income they have earned even though it has been confiscated by withholding.

In half the states of America, more people work for various levels of government than work in manufacturing. Without differentiating between public and private employment, the Bureau of Labor Statistics forecasts the biggest percentage increases in the following occupations by 2005: employment interviewers (who for the most part work for temp agencies), loan officers and counselors, management analysts and consultants, p.r. managers, p.r. specialists, lawyers and judges, paralegals, economists and market researchers, biomedical researchers (genetic engineering is shaping up to be the major thrust of future research), medical records technicians, dental hygienists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, home health aides, speech and language pathologists, psychologists, "human services workers," social workers, special education teachers (more and more children are being consigned to special ed in order to keep them out of the official averages on standardized tests), adult education teachers, teachers' aides, preschool teachers and childcare workers, counselors, actors (the booklet says "keen competition is expected for these jobs because large numbers of people are attracted to this career, which does not require formal preparation"), counter clerks, rental clerks, general office clerks, sales reps in service industries, receptionists, corrections officers, security guards, and private detectives and investigators.

The biggest losers? Agriculture, pe-



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troleum and mining engineers, surveyors, physicists, mathematicians, the clergy, reporters and correspondents, computer operators, fishermen, hunters and trappers, forestry and logging, mechanics, machinists, precision assemblers, tool-and-die makers, welders, textile and apparel workers, shoe and leather workers, and rail transport occupations—in other words, the kinds of jobs that make a nation self-sufficient.

The forced merger of Americans' standard of living with that of one billion worldwide unemployed and billions more in the Third World who slave for a few dollars a day will not fulfill the "every man a king" philosophy of the old American labor movement. This is why it is so important for those who desire this merger to sever the generational memory link and replace it with—nothing. In a word, multiculturalism.

Contrary to Goals 2000's prattle about "excellence," "technology," and "higher-order thinking," the economy of Oneworld will require a mere handful of programming and managerial brains; below them, a large stratum of militarized bureaucratic enforcers; and finally, a mass of manipulable, deracinated generic "labor"—with a tiny elite leveraging everything from without. The consolidation of wealth in our time grants the power to shake and shift the whole world to a small international elite.

While labor unions are weaker than ever and may lose what's left of their political clout through "campaign finance reform," human labor *qua* labor is faced with its greatest threat yet. Rather than denounce organized labor, conservatives need to recognize that it is the best ally we have against those who would destroy national sovereignty and other protections against globalist tyranny. We need a new international labor movement. Not "Workers of the World, Unite!" but the proletarianized middle classes of the West organizing themselves to resist the destruction of the forms of political sovereignty that protect them, and offering one another moral support in the process.

School-to-Work is not the only threat. The school science curriculum now consists of Saving the Earth 101: Recycling, Pollution, Preserving the Rainforest, and Global Warming. No attempt is made to convey scientific concepts; it is enough to learn to posture correctly whenever the elite—a very well-funded amateur scientific body, expert (in its own opinion) in the Laws of Nature—attempts to justify its grasping, willful ways by telling us what we must give up next. Thus science becomes a kind of courtier embellishment, a bag of magic tricks that "prove" such things as the need for more federal taxes and regulations to control "global warming."

Actual scientists are alarmed at the devolution of science instruction. Earlier this year, a group of 30 California scientists and teachers led by three Nobel laureates offered to write the state some K-12 science standards for free—but were rejected in favor of a group of the usual suspects, whom the state hired for $178,000.

Glenn Seaborg, co-discoverer of several uranium-related chemical elements, warned in the laureate group's proposal to California that "our citizens lack a depth of understanding even of the implications to society of rapid scientific progress, and our college-bound high school graduates lack the most rudimentary preparation for careers in the natural sciences. . . . Educational content is continually diluted in a failed effort to produce palatable bits of information for progressively less skilled students."

Tests administered by the National Assessment Governing Board in 1997 showed 33 percent of American fourth-graders have a "below basic" grasp of scientific concepts, with the proportion rising to 40 percent by eighth grade and 43 percent by 12th grade. No more than three percent of any state's student body performed at the advanced level. Boys slightly outperformed girls in 12th grade, but not in the lower grades, which indicates that science instruction is being tinkered with to boost girls and hobble boys, just as has been done with mathematics. The latest report of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study, released in February, shows this clearly: the United States was one of only three nations without a significant gender gap in "general math knowledge" among 12th graders. We also ranked last, below 20 European nations, in physics and advanced math—though we did beat out Cyprus and South Africa in "math and science literacy." Such is the price of gender equity.

Aside from this never-ending quest to make girls and minorities look as good as or (ideally) better than white males academically, there is another reason for the continual dilution of the math and science curriculum: now that all those smart dames who used to go into teaching enjoy a bevy of other career options, the profession is full of hacks who "teach" math and science and yet could not pass a mid-level course in any branch of either. One-third of high school math teachers and one-fifth of high school science teachers—and a full half of those teaching physical sciences—neither majored nor minored in their field.

So what exactly are these teachers teaching our kids to do? First of all, to eat anything but meat. Schoolchildren are trained to accept a diet radically different from that of their parents. They are fed chocolate-covered ants and grasshoppers by zealous activists during special events. Their *Weekly Reader* runs scary stories about mad cow disease and regularly beats the drums about Americans' wasteful eating habits. The number of grade-school children who have (at least temporarily) decided it's cool to be vegetarian is growing at a record rate.

Archer Daniels Midland, Supermarket to the World, runs an ad that asks, "When there are 20 billion at the table, the question will not be, 'Where will they sit?' but 'What will they eat?'" On the minimum Oneworld wage our children are slated to get, the answer is definitely not red meat.

Schoolchildren are also being taught the very metric system rejected repeatedly by their elders. Lessons and homework are expressed in metric, and the use of metric is required in order to pass unit tests. None of the dire prophecies of "America's inability to compete" in a world economy gone metric has come to pass, but it is the principle of the thing for the Oneworlders: they have decreed that metric is the One Best Way, and so we shall accept it or else.

Organized science has quit following the Christian calendar, employing instead such terms as BP (Before Present) and BCE (Before Current Era) to date geologic and astronomic events; and business may use the so-called "Millennium Bug" as an excuse to drop Christian dating altogether. Give them a centimeter, and they'll take a kilometer.

"Oh Russia, my wooden Russia! / I am your last poet," lamented Sergei Esenin. "Ancient mysterious world of mine, / You quietened like a wind blown out." But ah (as Esenin might have written), into that silenced vacuum of extinguished folkways oozes Global Culture, by default. The official food of the New World Order is pizza, the official sport is



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soccer, the official language is pidgin English (although the French are fighting that tooth and nail, to their credit), the official uniform is blue jeans (the better to feel like a real, productive worker), and the official orientation is homosexuality (the better to distract yourself from "politics" without either forming a family that might contest the state for authority or having uncontrolled quantities of children for the state to raise). "Yet I am ready," continued Esenin, "with a pure heart to swear / that street lighting in Baku / is better than the stars."

*Marian Kester Coombs writes from Crofton, Maryland.*

# More Power to the Faculty?

***by Paul Gottfried***

"More power to the faculty" is the current rallying cry of academic reformers. This idea pops up with a persistence that goes beyond ideological divides, appealing even to self-described academic traditionalists, who view professional administrators and boards of regents and trustees as philosophically out of tune. This criticism does seem valid if one looks at the intrusion of the federal government into American higher education over the last half-century. By funding our universities, the state has made them into laboratories and bully pulpits for every government-sponsored crusade, from fighting fascism, communism, and segregation to laboring for multiculturalism. But worse than the government for many "moderate" conservatives (who may in fact understate government's contribution to the problem at hand) have been the new-class academic administrators who represent multiculturalism and political correctness. *Academic Questions* and other educationally traditional publications feature stories about such types, who are thought to typify the academic managerial class. Meanwhile, the left also calls for reining in academic management. In *Dogmatic Wisdom*, socialist Russell Jacoby argues that professors, not their administrative superiors, will maintain standards against capitalist commercialization. According to Jacoby, where academic resistance to the "depersonalization" of students and the treatment of learning as a commodity can still be found, it is humanistic professors who are fighting the good fight.

Though it is possible to find both Jacoby's principled professors and the philistine administrators whom I heard Allan Bloom decry some 20 years ago, these portraits are nonetheless selective. Academic administrators more often than not come out of faculty ranks, and most must get along with professors in order to remain in office. Moreover, the cultural and social politics that these managers pursue overlap those of their professorial subordinates. In a diligently conducted survey, Stephen Balch demonstrated that most professors *secretly* oppose having social and gender quotas applied at their schools. However, most of those polled would not *openly* reveal this opinion. It is easy to imagine similar results in a poll of academic administrators. They too are threatened by affirmative action but publicly declare "diversity" as beneficial. And since administrators are recruited largely from the professoriate, they would share its other values, *ceteris paribus*.

From my experience, it seems improbable that any further shift of academic power from administration to faculties would improve college education. All assaults on traditional learning that I have witnessed since the 70's have started with, or received decisive backing from, the professoriate. Multiculturalism, gender-inclusive language, the dumbing down of courses, the inflation of grades, and the vigorous recruitment of academic candidates flaunting alternative lifestyles have all been *faculty* causes wherever I have worked. Though administrators have sometimes embraced the same causes, they have typically done so more slowly. At my college about five years ago, the faculty showed less than rational judgment by pressing the administration to make gender-inclusive language mandatory for institutional publications. The faculty even called for verification of such language in scholarly publications by their colleagues as well as in classroom teaching. Albeit languidly, the administration resisted, not wanting to shock the trustees or the public in a predominantly conservative Pennsylvania Dutch community.

But the new administration, which faculty representatives helped install, has applied no brake whatsoever to the multicultural engine. The language and politics of diversity and victimology have taken over at all levels. Both our lecture series and the outlines approved for our core courses showcase the struggle against sexism, homophobia, and institutionalized racism. Coupled with this is a litany from both faculty and administration about meeting the emotional needs of our students and raising their self-esteem. Though the administration is certainly anxious about retention at a small, vestigially denominational, all-purpose college, the major preoccupation with accommodating students at colleges, according to Myron Lieberman, has usually been on the faculty side. Professors raise their self-esteem by boasting about good student evaluations and by posing as progressive intellectuals. Administrative pressures contribute only minimally to such conduct.

Some might argue that the only way professors will become responsible is if they are made to assume real responsibility. If aging wastrels had to manage grown-up affairs, they would soon mature. But such advice takes no account of the effects of the experiment. It is like the effort by former HUD Secretary Jack Kemp to teach the underclass of Washington, D.C., about homeowning by having taxpayers subsidize low-income housing. It may make someone feel good, but it is not likely to instill responsibility—nor result in sound management. To the extent that colleges must try to be financially solvent, educationally rigorous, and professionally fair, it would be foolish to put most faculty in charge. According to studies by Robert E. McCormick and Roger E. Meiners, faculty rule has usually resulted in a deterioration of education. Though some may change jobs and go into administration, most faculty seem neither temperamentally nor emotionally suited for administrative work.

By focusing on professorial unfitness for managing education, I do not mean to confer a bill of health on either government or most academic administrations. While neither seems as irresponsible or ideologically driven as faculties, both have contributed to the same crises. Administrators, too, have politicized education, encouraged the erosion of academic standards, and pushed forward the diversity industry. But if responsible academic leadership is to be created, it cannot come from ordinary faculty ranks—and certainly not from intellectually unproductive faculty looking to



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make money in administrative posts.

At private schools, boards of trustees hold the actual reins of power and—if they exercised them sufficiently—could install presidents and administrations committed to better education. Though trustees have behaved less responsibly at the institutions I know, they have done so not because they hunger to be like faculty. Rather, they have turned down legitimate power because of a lack of moral interest, abdicating their rule in favor of those unsuited for the work of running educational institutions. Trustees have also picked presidents who shun critical decisions and who hide their lack of leadership behind therapeutic gibberish and bureaucratic process. Almost all college presidents of my acquaintance fit this unhappy description. But there was an age of highly activist presidents. Though not all of them acted in a way we might approve, one might do well by trading today's typical college presidents for leaders like Robert Maynard Hutchins, Charles Eliot, Nicholas Murray Butler, and James B. Conant. All of these presumed autocrats enhanced learning at their institutions and acted from an ethic of responsibility. Unfortunately, the problems that confront today's academic institutions go well beyond anything Hutchins or Conant could have imagined. Many colleges are more like resort hotels than places of learning. Others have been disfigured by the triumph of victimology and irrationality, and by weak-kneed administrators going with the flow.

Ordinary leadership is not enough. This situation calls for what Carl Schmitt characterized as "provisional dictatorship," the suspension of quotidian procedure and the delegation of extraordinary powers to those able to make universities run properly. Universities have a fixed function: to transmit an agreed-upon body of learning and the tools for analytic thinking. Schools which subordinate these tasks to sensitivity to kinky lifestyles and self-esteem for the incompetent are not academic institutions but enclaves of emotionally crippled individuals or crass recruiters of lazy adolescents.

Colleges and universities can only be brought back to an academic mission by having one imposed from above. This will often require unapologetic authoritarian rule by those enjoying the support of their superiors, and admirable indifference toward faculty grumbling and the outbursts of the American Association of University Professors.

As a young professor, I had the pleasure of working for John Howard, former president of Rockford College and the founder of The Rockford Institute. Descendant of an illustrious Midwestern family and a man of considerable financial and moral resources, Howard ran the college as a dutiful autocrat. He hired outstanding young scholars to grace his departments, built an entirely new campus without incurring debt, and gave back his salary each year to underscore the purity of his service. His stiff Methodist manner offended the politically fashionable but contributed to his reputation of incorruptibility. Howard's successor, who began as a darling of the faculty, spent millions of dollars on grandiose projects (as well as on his own lifestyle) before dilatory trustees finally got rid of him. He left the college disastrously in debt and having to sell most of its property to stay open. But as a generous partygiver and the husband of a self-declared feminist, he remained popular among the faculty until his fall.

As a sociological generalization admitting exceptions, it may be argued that the best college and university presidents have been educated nonacademicians—or marginal members of the professoriate without its dominant social attitudes. Bourgeois patricians have been particularly honest and effective leaders, but ascending from the faculty is not a hopeless obstacle for academic leadership, as long as the leader has an independent sense of social worth and a critical view of his subordinates. The least desirable situation is that he feel dependent on them politically or emotionally. One infers from Lieberman's works on unionized "education" that more than material interests unites his subjects and allows them to adulterate their products while remaining morally arrogant. They share an esprit de corps derived from their inflated status, one that cannot be shaken even when its bearers reduce instruction to feel-good pabulum and restructure their personalities to fit student evaluations. It is therefore imperative that those who seek to reform their activities neither think like them nor crave their approval. Only then can provisional dictators save college faculties from their all too apparent lower natures.

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# Why Evangelical Colleges Aren't

*by Douglas Wilson*

Two separate educational movements exist within the evangelical world, one old and one new, and they are clearly on a collision course. One thing does lead to another, and he who says A must say B. The widespread parental challenge to the tax-financed secularism of the government school system is by now common knowledge. By the thousands, parents are saying, "Not with my kid, you don't," and have enrolled their children in private academies, have started to homeschool, have taken advantage of tutorial services, and so forth. However, this growing challenge to secular education will have some ramifications in the years to come, ramifications for which established evangelical colleges are singularly unprepared. The reasons for this are legion, but all reduce to the embarrassing fact that there is far too much "jelly" in "evangelical."

Parents are not about to spend years sacrificing themselves to provide a private Christian education, only to give it all away when an "evangelical" college offers to undo all they accomplished in the previous 12 years. A graduate of an evangelical establishment like Wheaton has a far better chance of receiving a diploma in trendy leftism than his counterpart down the road at Leviathan State U. Colleges like Westmont, Gordon, and Bethel all have a fine reputation to uphold; unfortunately, upholding it these days can mean schmoozing it up with the spirit of the age. And even when nothing overtly objectionable is done as a result, the college has to remain bland enough not to cross accrediting agencies with anything like a distinctively Christian view of the world. Brer evangelical, he lay low.

But studied neutrality is impossible, and obnoxious examples are cropping up more and more frequently, in fulfillment of a collegial application of the dictum that a man who doesn't stand for something will fall for anything. We now find the *zeitgeist* appearing in raunchy requirements for classes, "revivals" that resemble group therapy confessionals, and urbane professorial muddling about with postmodern relativism.

At Leviathan U, the Christian students



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are wary, knowing that the faculty are largely in the employ of old slewfoot. But at Wheaton, the Billy Graham Center is right across the street, the jargon is full of all the right God-words, and revivals that don't change a damn thing still appear with some regularity.

But parents who have spent years educating themselves on educational issues are not going to forget what they have learned simply because their children are now in 13th grade. Nor will they look the other way just because the charade is appropriately baptized. Such parents will beware of wolves in sheepskins, and this leads us to consider why many of them will come to the conclusion that evangelical colleges . . . aren't.

For the most part, these colleges were established before the cultural fruit of the antithesis between secularism and Christianity was quite as apparent as it is now. These colleges were founded over a century ago, and the Christian school movement has only developed within the last 20. The Christian school movement was formed in self-conscious reaction to the regnant foolishness, while the Christian colleges, proudly part of the establishment, are a significant part of that foolishness. These two movements are already looking at one another across a great divide.

According to popular mythology in conservative circles, the 19th century was a time of strong traditional values, when it was actually a monkey house of radicalism. The traditional values, such as they were, were the harvest of what had been planted in previous centuries—vestiges of Christendom. But the crop that was *sown* in that era is the one we are harvesting now. That this was occurring was apparent at that time to foresighted individuals, but there were not many of them. Apostate utopias were still at the blueprint stage, or, to change the metaphor drastically, the pudding that proves had not yet been eaten.

Now in the 19th century, when most of these evangelical colleges were being established, they were themselves a leading manifestation of this democratizing spirit, this utopian pragmatism. Our nation was young, full of beans and democratic zeal, and American evangelicals were industrious in making the democratization of religion one of their central distinctives. Among many other things, this was reflected in the colleges they built. The principles institutionalized in the evangelical colleges at that time have now borne fruit, which contemporary evangelical parents are refusing to eat.

A great deal of energy could be preserved if, before attempting reform, we would spend more time trying to identify the genuine point of departure. True, prayer was banished from the government school system in the 1960's, but the roots of our disorder go much deeper than this: they stem from the American abandonment of the idea of Christendom. This abandonment did not come all at once, but by the time of the establishment of most denominational and interdenominational evangelical colleges, the divorce had been finalized.

We like to think of the church as victim, but on our continent, the church has largely played the role of instigator. The good intentions involved did nothing more than make the church a blind instigator. Like it or not, the church necessarily has a position of leadership. The declension of culture in America is comparable to well-meaning but naive parents who raise a child without discipline, without instilling self-control, and who are then shocked at the *extent* of the rebellion apparent when that child gets away from home. The extent of our current rebellion can be seen in our cultural parade of sodomites, cotqueans, health nazis, and feminists. But the *nature* of this rebellion was established long before. There were women in pulpits and standing at altars long before they were seated in the cockpits of F-16s.

Cultures come to resemble their gods. "They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them" (Ps. 115:8). The new society, following evangelicalism, emphasized personal choice. This meant that the confessional approach to higher education had to be abandoned, and the elective system was brought in to replace it. Churches were disestablished, and began to compete for customers, just like Sears & Roebuck. St. Paul used to travel around the ancient Roman world, preaching the word and seeking disciples. Our churches began to hustle around the block, looking for clients and customers. Religious colleges were operating in the same strange world, and began to compete for students with even *less* of a confessional interest than the churches now had. For everyone was now in pursuit of customers, and, as the world of business teaches us, the customer is always right.

The market system works just fine when we are seeking the kind of toothpaste that suits us best. But when the true, the good, and the beautiful are made into elective courses, no one should be surprised when freshmen consistently sign up for the far more popular courses promoting the false, the wrong, and the ugly. When colleges ceased to pass on an inherited body of knowledge and began catering to the interests and desires of the public, the destruction was complete. The fact that many of the colleges which ceased to pass on the tradition were called "evangelical" mattered not in the slightest.

But the appearance of market freedom is just an appearance. Elitism is inescapable; the dominance of egalitarianism simply means that the established elite must deck themselves out in the name of supposedly neutral standards. Evangelical colleges have agreed to burn their incense to the emperor, and now regularly come before secular accrediting agencies and boards, hat in hand. "Please, sir, may we teach some scratch 'n' sniff form of the Christian faith?" Well, all right . . . for now.

This hunger for approval in disreputable places has had a predictable effect. "How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (John 5:44). The pecking order has been established, and those institutions which are hungry for academic respectability must respect the pecking order. This means that colleges which want accreditation must get their faculty from previously approved institutions, and must vow never to do anything which seriously challenges the existing order. They must determine to be the very model of kennel-fed Christianity.

Complaints about the bizarre fruit of all this are common because they are too easy. Postmodern whimwham presents an easy target. But we have spent several centuries getting here, and a stern letter to the denominational magazine will accomplish nothing. Our only real hope is that the parents currently showing such zeal in the sound education of their younger children will not be too tired, when the time comes, to turn their attention to the establishment of small but genuine colleges.

*Douglas Wilson is a pastor in Moscow, Idaho, and the author of* Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning.



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*by Chilton Williamson, Jr.*

## The Horror!

At four-thirty in the afternoon Papa's on North Mesa Street in El Paso was preparing to open for business. Although the place looks like a student hangout and is located near the university, the clientele is largely well-to-do professional men who can easily afford the nine, twelve, and twenty-dollar cigars displayed in a wide tall case to the right of the long bar up front. The barman rolled the dinged aluminum kegs under the bar and hooked them into the beer taps while, at the opposite end of the restaurant, the featured rock band that evening carried in its sound equipment from a pickup truck. The waiters in black pants and clean white shirts, finished with their setup and ready to go to work, sat across the room by the windows, smoking a last cigarette and talking. With them was Bobby Ramirez, the El Paso ticket agent for the Plaza Monumental de Toros in Juárez. The big man who questioned me at the door wasn't admitting drinkers yet, not even his best lushes, but when Bobby saw me he stood from the table where he had been sitting with his back to the window and walked down along the bar and put his hand out.

"You're going over to the fight tomorrow?"

"Of course. Are you?"

"I don't think so. It's only a *novillado*."

"In the last *corrida* the best performance was by a *novillero*."

Bobby Ramirez smiled.

"You didn't like El Juli?"

"I thought he seemed in a hurry to get through and get out of there."

"I heard he had a plane to catch to Madrid."

"He is still in Mexico. But he is booked ahead already for two years."

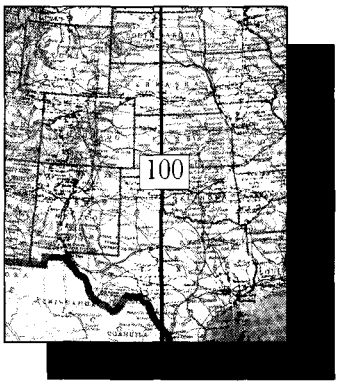
"That isn't bad for 15 years old."

He shrugged. "Anyway, there is no El Juli fighting tomorrow."

"Well, we'll see you on the 28th then. It's supposed to be a good fight."

"Or maybe tomorrow, who knows? I like going for dinner afterward and drinking in the bars in Juárez where no one knows me. In El Paso I run into all the guys I've had to throw out of this place."

"So you go across to Mexico for a little




peace and quiet."

"Sure. Last year I had a seat just above where the guys who got shot were sitting and just below the guys who killed them. They were all packing guns and smoking big cigars and I could tell something was up. Going away from the ring I was trying to put some distance between me and them when I got caught in the crowd, and then the shooting started."

There was a thing I had been meaning to ask Bobby before, and now I remembered it.

"Have they been after you yet, in El Paso?"

He looked surprised. "Have who been after me?"

"The animal rights people. They made life hell for the previous ticket agents over here."

"I haven't heard a thing." Bobby Ramirez grinned. "Anyway, I haven't had to throw any of them out."

I exchanged $66 for three tickets and we shook hands again. A sign on the outside of Papa's overlooking the little parking lot read, "Ask not for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee." It seemed to say a lot for the place that it didn't attribute the quote to Ernest Hemingway.

We did not look at the program next day before the fight. "It's a woman!" Jim Rauen exclaimed as the *cuadrilla* entered the ring and the three aspiring matadors advanced across the sand with their folded capes on their arms. Two of them were tall and dark-headed, the other small and blonde with a figure that fulfilled the gold-and-green brocaded suit in pleasing and arresting ways. Her name was Marbella Romero, billed as "*la preciosa Torera de Morelia*," Morelia being an old colonial town in the south of Mexico. With her blonde hair, pale skin, and straight, almost severe profile she looked more Castilian than Mexican, but what mattered now was what she was inside, not out, because in 30 minutes she had to face a bull here in the ring with her *cuadrilla*, which is to say with help but still very much alone. The men walking beside her were José Gabriel and Javier Gutierrez, and the combined age of all three of them was probably around 54 years.

The bulls were from the Piedras Negras ranch, wonderful gray animals propelled by plenty of muscle and spirit and very fast on their feet. They knocked at the *burladeros* with their horns as the men drew in their capes from before their noses as they passed by, skidded on to a halt, and stood pawing the sand fiercely. Gabriel and Gutierrez did some good cape work, but they shifted their feet too often as the bull charged and led him too far, interrupting the fluid rhythm of the pass and repass until the action in its entirety became awkward and broken. Both Gabriel and Gutierrez received knocks from the bull a couple of times without serious injury, while their families looked on calmly. A small boy with his father in the first row of seats a short distance away sat messing with a cob of sweet corn on a stick.

"Look at that kid eating cob corn," I remarked.

"He's not eating it," Jim said. "He's putting it in his hair."

The mules hauled away the carcass of Gutierrez's first bull, the men smoothed the sand over with rakes, and Senorita Romero finished her warm-up exercises behind the *barrera*. As her *cuadrilla* took their positions around the ring, she spread her forearms on the red-painted wood and rested her chin on her hands, watching the door marked *Toriles* directly across the arena. The door opened and the bull charged through it, wearing the Piedras Negras rosette on his shoulder. He made one complete circuit of the ring, hitting at the *burladeros* with his horn, reversed direction, and charged again with a momentum that carried him over the *barrero* and the *callejon* behind it, almost on top of the boy with the corn cob and his father. The bull's front hooves struck the concrete wall just be-



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low the first seating row and his head and horns were far enough into the seats to make him almost a spectator himself. Flailing, he dropped down into the *callejon* and ran clockwise until he reached the next opening into the ring, where he met up again with the men who had vaulted over the *barrera* just ahead of him. When things had quieted down a bit I looked over to Senorita Romero again. She was standing straight now behind the red painted fence as she prepared to enter the ring and take the bull away from the men, and she looked cool and relaxed as if she were arriving at a chic Mexico City grille to meet a girlfriend for lunch after a morning spent having her hair coifed and her nails done.

Marbella Romero did not do a bad job with her first bull. She looked good in the ring except when, approaching the animal, she imitated the matador's showy strut which does not look so well when performed by a woman but appears, in fact, a little ridiculous. She did not really have the figure either for a *torera*, being short in stature and with too womanly a build. But the crowd, loving her, ignored her mistakes, applauding wildly and shouting "*Guera! Guera!*" ("guera," in a peculiarly Mexican idiomatic usage, means "fair" or "blonde"), while the female controversialist high up in the arena who during Gutierrez's and Romero's performances had been yelling "*Arriba toro! Arriba toro!*" ("Up with the bull!") fell silent now. While making her veronicas Romero was bumped by the horn, and it appeared as she stood against the *barrera* massaging her leg that she would be unable to conclude the fight. But she returned to it gamely and almost at once the bull caught her, knocked her down, and went after her with his horns while his wide hoofs trampled the sand. Marbella lay on her stomach with the forward part of her body propped on her elbows as she tried to rise; her mouth was partly open and her eyes looked enormous. The crowd, shocked by the imminent prospect of seeing a woman gored to death, made a low, unheard of sound. The *cuadrilla* drew the bull off with the capes, and the girl sprang to retrieve her sword. Then she turned, covered with blood, to face the bull again.

"She's hurt," I exclaimed.

"That's the bull's blood, not hers," Jim said. "She's okay."

Marbella Romero killed her bull, but she was compelled, after several attempts to go in over the horns, to kill with a thrust behind the poll to the brain. She had the crowd's fullest sympathy anyway and exploited it fully, making a circuit of the ring while people threw things down and applauded. Romero limped badly and her beautiful suit was covered with blood and sand, but she looked proud of herself and very happy.

"In El Paso, it's illegal for that young lady to buy a pack of cigarettes," Jim Rauen remarked.

"Or a glass of beer."

"She could get a legal abortion though."

"If they didn't have her in jail for cruelty to animals."

"Along with her parents doing ten years for child abuse. Or would it be child neglect?"

"Anyway, it makes you proud to be an American."

The bullfight critic for *Norte de Ciudad Juárez* wrote later on that evening that the audience for the *novillado* should have stayed home, but we didn't agree with him. Bullfighters, like baseball players and opera singers, have to start somewhere.

Throughout northern Mexico—along the U.S.-Mexico border in particular—bullfighting has made a comeback in recent years. Yet for big city newspapers on the American side of the border, with their lavish arts and entertainment sections covering cultural and multicultural events including border book fairs, chili cookoffs and Big Enchilada festivals, Chicana poetry readings, mariachi concerts, ranch heritage barbecues, and appearances by Dr. Henry Kissinger, the *corrida* is a non-event. Even in New Mexico, *aficionados* are regarded as not-so-harmless eccentrics of a type who rent snuff movies on Saturday nights and harbor a secret wish to rescue gladiatorial combat from the mists of ancient history. The bullfight, imagined as a celebration of and indulgence in gratuitous violence, is a fearsome thing for what remains of the Anglo-American public which, without actually saying so, abhors it as the quintessential emblem of Latin bloodthirst.

Stereotypes regarding Latin violence and cruelty, like all stereotypes, conform essentially with known facts. The "lawless roads"—and cities—of Mexico today are more violent than they have been at any time since Graham Greene visited the country in the 1930's. But banditry, drug wars, political assassinations, government massacres, and murder are not branches on the same vine from which the *corrida* grew, the bullfight being about control and order, not chaos. And it is chaos, not violence as such, that is headed our way from Latin America, borne along as dangerous refuse on a flood tide of effectively uncontrolled immigration. For the United States, where multiculturalism has become official dogma, importing the *corrida* to the American Southwest would be the logical and proper thing—as much as accepting limitless numbers of "Hispanics" is illogical and improper. "Cultural enrichment" is not the same thing as mob immigration, but it is not at odds with restriction, either. Civilization would be bullfight *ferias* throughout the Southwestern states, which could be protected nonetheless from the threat of cultural violence in its many forms: poverty, dependency, political instability, ineptitude, and corruption. Instead, American politicians enthusiastically admit a million disruptive foreigners a year with the understanding that they will wear their Nikes to football games, not bullfights, and eat only hamburgers made from humanely butchered beeves.

On a recent flight from Chicago to El Paso on American Airlines' Immigrant Express, I sat listening to the conversation of two "Hispanics" in the seats behind me. The woman was a native of El Paso, where she was returning after a visit with relatives in the Chicago area. The man had been born and raised in Juárez, moved to the United States where he became a naturalized citizen, and landed a job as a professor of something or other at the University of Iowa. Having lost a grandparent over the weekend, he was on his way home to Juárez to attend the funeral.

"You know," the woman said, "the way things are headed, we'll be the majority by the year 2050."

"Yes," he agreed. "It's going to be our country before we know it."

Perhaps so, but if the three of us should happen to be alive 52 years from now, they won't like it any better than I will because we'll have the worst of both worlds then. I almost turned around in my seat to give them the bad news, and decided to forget it. It didn't really seem worthwhile spoiling their day. ◁

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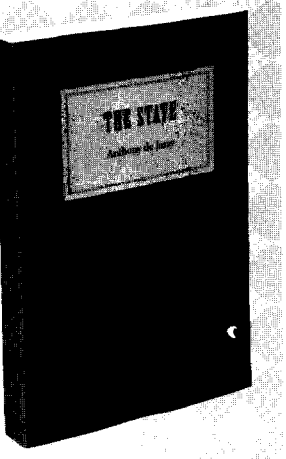


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**Anthony de Jasay** is the author also of *Social Contract, Free Ride* (1989) and *Against Politics* (1997).

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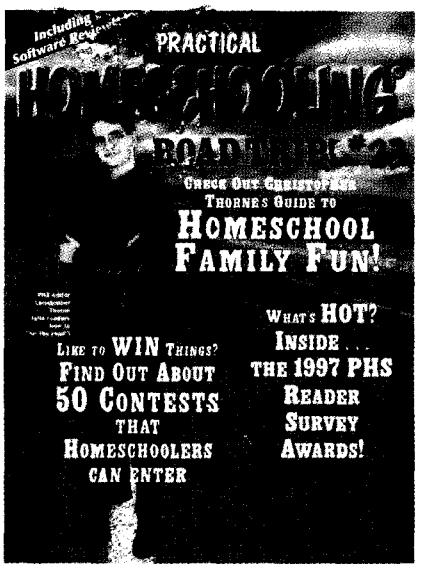
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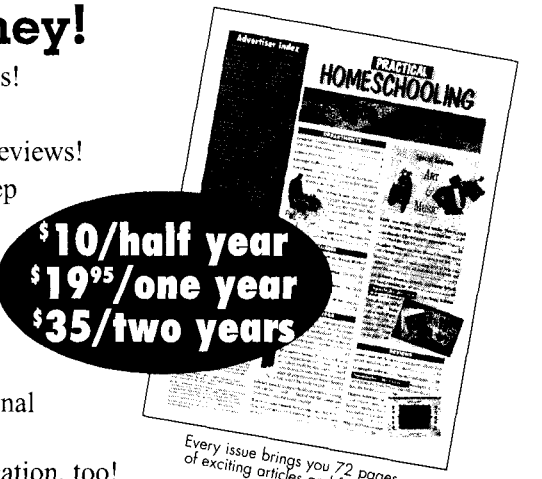


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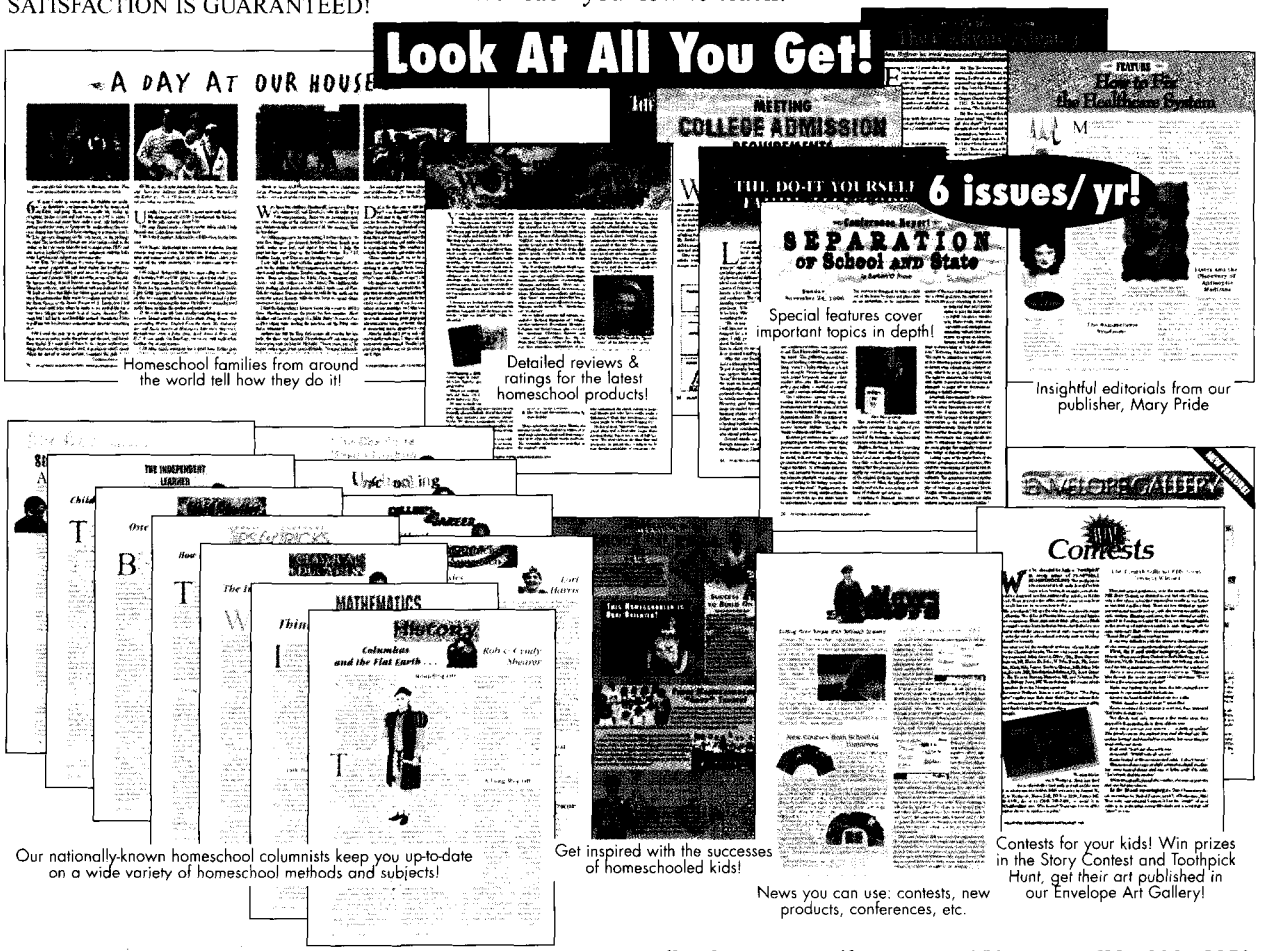
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